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THE LONDON BEER FLOOD

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How people power toppled a king and changed the course of history

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# WELCOME OCTOBER 2021

The events of the French Revolution caused shockwaves across Europe

The French Revolution was a time of seismic political and societal change for France – a period that saw King Louis XVI, and thousands of others, lose their heads to 'Madame Guillotine', and the birth of a new French Republic. The ripples of the revolution would be felt for centuries to come, with the events of 1789 and beyond becoming an inspiration for uprisings across Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. **In this month's essential guide, with the help of Professor Marisa Linton, we examine this period of turmoil and change.** Read more from page 28.

Elsewhere, author Margalit Fox explores the true story of two young officers who **engineered an incredible escape from a Turkish PoW camp during World War I** using secret codes, buried clues and Ouija boards (*page 61*). We also look at what might have happened **had the Jacobites been successful in their campaign to restore the Stuart monarchy to the British throne** (*page 70*), and pay a visit to various sites across the world that now lie deep underwater – **from Jamaica's Port Royal, to Capel Celyn in Wales** (*page 66*).

Plus, we'll also be investigating some of history's most intriguing questions, including why do we say 'eavesdrop'? And which capital cities are named after US presidents? Find out the answers from page 73. What's more, to celebrate our forthcoming 100th issue, we're giving you the chance to subscribe and receive six issues for just £10. Turn to page 26 for more details.

See you next month!

**Charlotte Hodgman**
Editor

## THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

**4 billion**
The cost, in livres, of France's national debt by the mid-1780s after decades of war

**198**
The number of pseudonyms used by writer Daniel Defoe – including Count Kidney Face

**17,000**
The official number of people executed during the Terror in France

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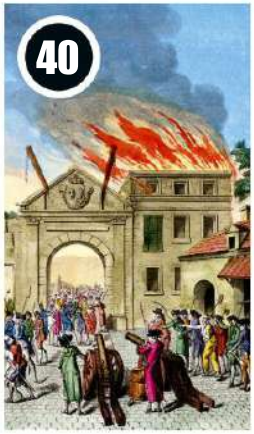

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SNAPSHOTS

# 1901
# A TRADITIONAL WELCOME

An impressive *haka* dance is performed in Rotorua, New Zealand, to mark the arrival of the Duke of Cornwall (the future King George V) during his 1901 tour of the British empire. The ceremonial posture dance was originally performed by Māori warriors as they prepared for battle, its aggressive movements and facial expressions designed to scare the enemy and call upon the god of war to help them emerge victorious.

As well as a chance to experience Māori culture up close, the Duke's eight-month tour also saw him visit the Commonwealth of Australia, where he opened the country's first national parliament. Prior to 1901, it had been made up of six self-governing colonies: Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania, Western Australia and South Australia.

ALAMY

SNAPSHOTS

# 1930s
# SPOOKS IN THE CITY

Celebrated each year on 31 October, Halloween has its origins in the Christian holiday of All Hallow's Eve – ahead of All Saints' Day (1 November) and All Souls' Day (2 November), when those who have died are traditionally remembered.

As demonstrated by these two young New Yorkers, one popular Halloween tradition is the carving of pumpkins to make jack-o'-lanterns. The ritual was first brought to the US by Irish immigrants, who used the lanterns (originally fashioned from turnips, potatoes and beets) to scare off 'Stingy Jack' – a folk figure who was said to have been forced to roam the earth after being banished from heaven and hell.

GETTY IMAGES

SNAPSHOTS

# 1908
# PARTY IN THE PAST

Scores of Viennese citizens don period costume to celebrate the diamond jubilee of Austro-Hungarian emperor Franz Joseph I, who entered his seventh decade on the throne in December 1908. Dubbed *Kaiserhuldigungsfestzug* (Emperor Homage Procession), the festivities included a parade of 12,000 performers through Vienna, attended by a further 500,000 spectators.

While this photograph shows people recreating a harvest during the reign of Joseph II (1765–90), several other historical scenes were staged, including a castle siege from the 13th century. Franz Joseph I would remain in power until his death in November 1916, becoming the longest-reigning ruler in Austria and Hungary's history.

GETTY IMAGES

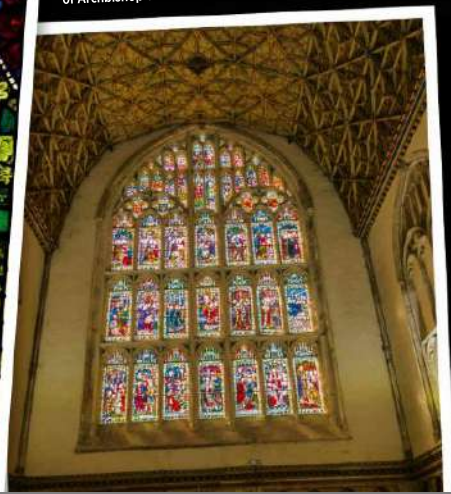
# THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH...

RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

A hand-held device called a windolyser was used to help determine the age of the glass

LEFT: A stained glass window at Canterbury Cathedral depicting the prophet Nathan

BELOW: If the windows are as old as experts now believe, they would have been in place at the time of Archbishop Thomas Becket's murder in 1170



## HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

A new study suggests that some of Canterbury Cathedral's stained glass could be among the oldest surviving examples in Europe. The 86 Ancestor windows, which depict the ancestors of Christ, were originally thought to have been made in the early 13th century during rebuilding work that took place in the wake of a major fire in 1174. But a new form of non-destructive chemical analysis of the glass has indicated that some of the windows may pre-date the fire, and could have been made as early as 1130. Very little stained glass created before the mid-12th century survives anywhere in the world so, if confirmed, this would be an internationally significant discovery.

ALAMY X 3, SOUTH WEST NEWS SERVICE, BBC NEWS, JOE UZIEL, ISRAEL ANTIQUITIES AUTHORITY

### WWII WEAPONS HOARDER FINED

A German pensioner has been convicted of possessing illegal World War II weapons following the discovery, in 2015, of a WWII Panther tank (*right*) and other military equipment, including assault rifles, at a home in Heikendorf. The defendant received a fine of €250,000, was given a 14-month suspended prison sentence, and has been ordered to sell or donate the tank and anti-aircraft cannon to a museum or collector within two years. It's alleged that the pensioner collector had been seen using the tank as a snow plough.

### UNUSED RAF UNIFORM HIDDEN FOR 70 YEARS

A recent house clearance in Staffordshire has revealed a pristine RAF service dress uniform that had lain inside an unopened parcel for 70 years (*below*). The brown paper bag and newspaper parcel, held together by string, was sent to auctioneers who discovered its unique contents – the three-blade propeller badge on the jacket's sleeve suggests the uniform was to be worn by a senior aircraftman. The newspaper pages used to wrap the uniform were dated November 1951, indicating just how long the parcel had remained unopened. The uniform will now be sold at auction.

### BIBLICAL EARTHQUAKE REAL?

Archaeologists may have found proof of an earthquake described in the Book of Amos in the Old Testament and Tanakh. The Israel Antiquities Authority and Ir David Foundation have been carrying out excavations in Jerusalem (*left*), during which they have found evidence of damage to buildings and pottery. The discovery corresponds with similar findings across Jerusalem and other sites, suggesting that an earthquake may well have occurred in the region around 2,800 years ago.

**£2,375**

The auction sale price of a 13th-century spoon originally bought for 20 pence at a car boot sale in London

### LIVERPOOL LOSES UNESCO STATUS

A waterfront development in Liverpool has seen the city lose its UNESCO World Heritage status, with a UN committee describing the redevelopment of the city's docklands and plans to build a new stadium for Everton Football Club as causing "serious deterioration" to the historic site. Liverpool was awarded World Heritage status in 2004 due to its architectural landmarks and past as a major global trading port. The same UN committee has recently added 33 more sites to the World Heritage list, including the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales.

A gory medical 'procedure' is carried out by the London Dungeon's plague doctor. As head of performance, Richard Quincey is responsible for making sure the actors are as convincing as possible

Richard's all-time favourite character – the 'Torturer' – torments another unfortunate participant

The fictional tale of Sweeney Todd – and the human pies made by the demon barber's accomplice, Mrs Lovett – form a popular part of the Dungeon experience

Although Richard works behind the scenes, he still relishes every opportunity to get into costume

THE LONDON DUNGEON X6

# Head of performance at the London Dungeon

Richard Quincey

**HOW DID YOU BEGIN WORKING AT THE LONDON DUNGEON?**
I initially joined the Dungeon as a summer cast member back in 2001, having auditioned along with other hopefuls. Luckily the managers saw the potential in me, and as the summer went on, they could see how much I enjoyed playing the various characters – from a crazed crypt keeper to demon barber Sweeney Todd – and decided to extend my contract. Over the years I have worked my way up to the position I am in today as head of performance. Although I very rarely perform to guests anymore, I am still able to have a strong influence on our audiences.

**WHO HAS BEEN YOUR FAVOURITE CHARACTER TO PLAY AND WHY?**
My favourite character has always been our Torturer – I think the images you can conjure up for guests using the instruments we have on show can be disturbing and funny in equal measure. To think our ancestors would punish each other by making them wear a scold's bridle (a painful iron muzzle) or lowering them onto a Judas cradle (a pyramid-shaped chair) is remarkable. It sums up the Dungeon's brand perfectly; that juxtaposition of humour and fear.

"I could be directing an actor one moment, and the next I could be helping a guest who is crying with fear"

Jack the Ripper lurks in the shadows as his final victim, Mary Jane Kelly, speaks with guests. The story continues to "terrify" people, says Richard

**WHAT'S AN AVERAGE DAY AT WORK LIKE FOR YOU?**
In all honesty, my days are so varied. I could be directing an actor on how to play a plague doctor more convincingly one moment, and the next I could be helping a guest who is crying with fear and doesn't want to continue anymore. One of the things I love most about the job is that every day can be different, and I am so lucky to be able to work with such a talented cast that can really bring these characters to life.

**HOW MUCH RESEARCH GOES INTO THE CHARACTERS AND SCENES?**
We want to ensure that we have a degree of historical truth behind our stories, but we do have to take a bit of theatrical licence as well. I mean, how else could you get to hear Guy Fawkes talk about his own capture? We search for interesting facts that intrigue our guests, but these need to be balanced with things like plot, character, scares and humour. Our scripts go through many different drafts before we take them to rehearsals.

**DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE HISTORICAL FACT YOU'VE LEARNED SINCE WORKING AT THE LONDON DUNGEON?**
While doing some work on the Great Fire of London, I discovered that Samuel Pepys buried some expensive cheese in the ground for safe-keeping. It may have made total sense back then, but through today's eyes it just seems bonkers!

**IN YOUR OPINION, WHO IS THE SCARIEST FIGURE FROM BRITISH HISTORY?**
I would say Jack the Ripper. With all I have done with this story during my time at the London Dungeon, the Ripper murders still offer so much, and continue to terrify audiences. The more you look into the case – from the victims to the suspects – the more the mystery deepens.

**RICHARD QUINCEY** is head of performance at the London Dungeon. The venue is one of several attractions of its kind managed by Merlin Entertainments. Find out more at *thedungeons.com*

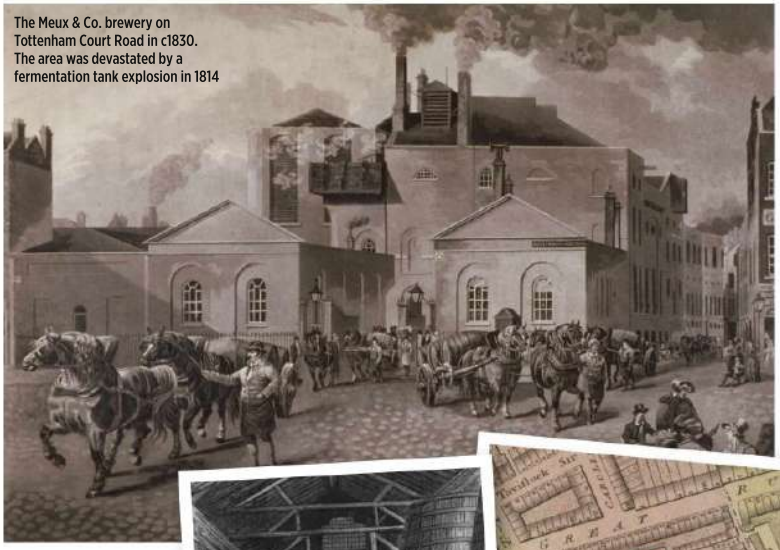
# Londoners drown in a tidal wave of beer

Words: Emma Slattery Williams

Sometimes too much of a good thing can be bad for you – this adage can definitely be said to apply to the tragic events that took place in St Giles, London, on the afternoon of 17 October 1814. Free beer literally flowed along the street, but it was certainly not the merry event one might imagine.

The Horse Shoe Brewery, owned by Meux & Co., could be found at the corner of Great Russell Street and Tottenham Court Road. One of the largest breweries in London, it had stood there for decades and was an established producer of porter – a type of beer made with brown malt. The brewery's 22-foot-tall wooden fermentation tank was an impressive sight, and could hold more than 3,500 barrels of beer – enough to provide a pint each to more than one million people.

The area of St Giles was home to many of London's poorest inhabitants, as well as immigrants, and until the mid-19th century was the site of a notorious rookery – a slum where entire families crammed into one room, and crime was rife. In fact, William Hogarth's famous 1751 print *Gin Lane* – depicting the evils of gin as opposed to the merits of beer – was set in St Giles (*see image on opposite page*); it was this impoverished area of the city that would witness a disaster few could have predicted.



The Meux & Co. brewery on Tottenham Court Road in c1830. The area was devastated by a fermentation tank explosion in 1814

Fermentation tanks, such as these at the Barclay, Perkins and Company brewery, held vast quantities of beer

The Horse Shoe Brewery, circled in red, was one of London's biggest breweries

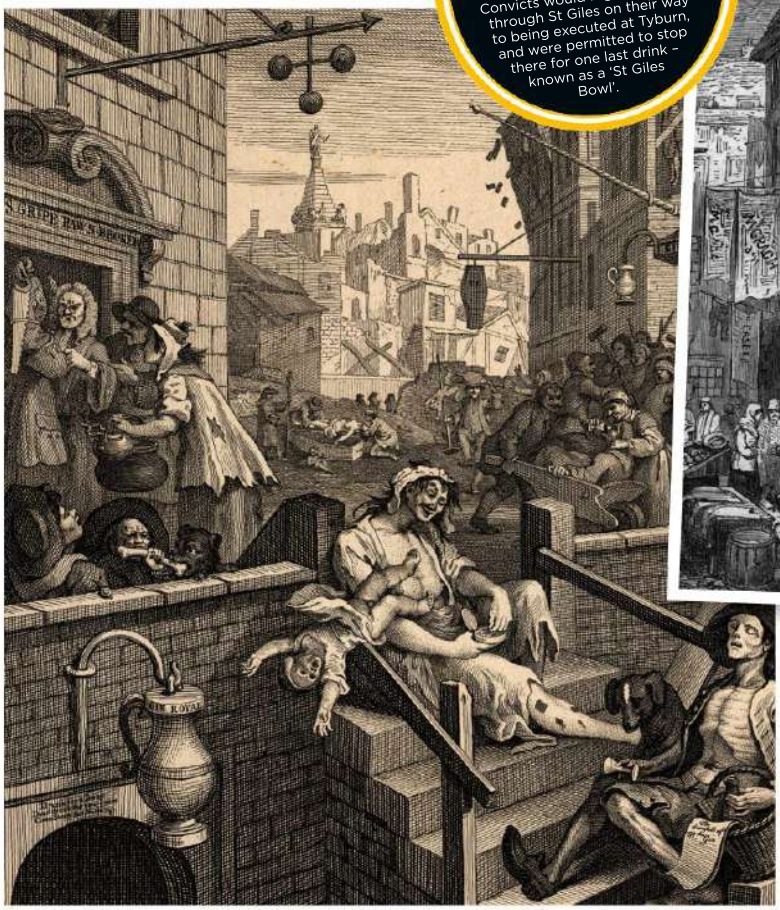
## CHAOS FLOWS

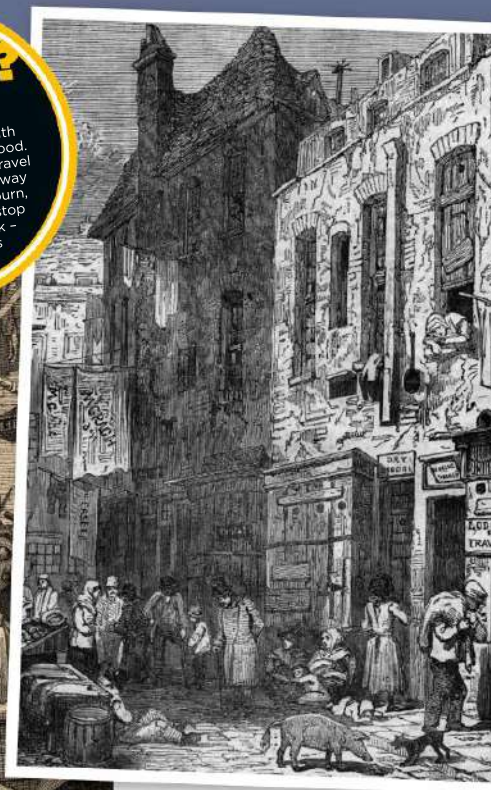
At around 4.30 in the afternoon, George Crick, the storehouse clerk of Meux & Co., noticed that one of the iron rings that held the huge fermentation tank together had broken. Such an event happened a few times a year, so Crick's superior asked him to make a note of the damage to be repaired later. The tank, however, was full and the pressure within meant it was fit to burst.

Just over an hour later, St Giles was flooded with beer as a 15-foot wave of porter swept through the streets. Such was the force of the spouting hot beer that part of the 25-foot brewery wall collapsed, and several neighbouring tanks also ruptured. In a matter of minutes, the brewery and surrounding area was engulfed in around 320,000 gallons of dark brown beer.

George Crick witnessed the event and later reported the scene to a local newspaper: "I was on a platform about 30 feet from the vat when it burst. I heard the crash as it went off, and ran immediately to the storehouse, where the vat was situated. It caused dreadful devastation on the premises – it knocked four butts over, and staved several, as the pressure was so excessive. Between 8 and 9,000 barrels of porter [were] lost."

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X1





**DID YOU KNOW?**

**LAST ORDERS**

St Giles already had an interesting connection with drinking before the 1814 flood. Convicts would regularly travel through St Giles on their way to being executed at Tyburn, and were permitted to stop there for one last drink – known as a 'St Giles Bowl'.

ABOVE LEFT: **William Hogarth's famous print, *Gin Lane*, warned of the perils of cheaply available alcohol**

ABOVE RIGHT: **The rookery in St Giles, London, 1849**

"The rushing liquid knocked down everything in its path, including people, collapsing the basements of houses"

With no street drainage, the beer had nowhere to go except into cellars and basements – many of which were occupied, forcing the inhabitants to clamber onto furniture for safety. The rushing liquid knocked down everything in its path, including people, causing mayhem and collapsing the basements of houses; the alcoholic fumes alone would have also overpowered many.

In a house on New Street – a small cul-de-sac behind the brewery – a young girl and her mother were killed while taking tea, and in the basement next door, a wake was being held for a two-year-old Irish boy. All five mourners were killed as a wave of alcohol filled the room; a child's body was also later found in a neighbouring house.

Another fatality was a teenage pub servant from the nearby Tavistock Arms, who became trapped when the walls of the pub collapsed onto her. Remarkably, there were no deaths in the brewery itself, but many suffered injuries as they were swept away by the flood or became buried under rubble.

The following morning, people surveyed the devastation in horror. The *Morning Post* described the sight as an "immense mass of ruins… the surrounding scene of desolation presents a most awful and terrific appearance, equal to that which fire or earthquake may be supposed to occasion".

In the days that followed, some locals resorted to making the best of the situation by collecting the 'free' beer in any vessel they could find. There were reports of one further death from alcohol poisoning, as people drank the beer straight from the street, although this is unconfirmed.

The remains of the brewery became an overnight attraction, and watchmen charged people a penny to visit the ruined building. Many of these visitors also generously donated money for the victims' funerals – so shocked were they by what had happened.

### GOD'S WRATH

An investigation into the tragedy was launched and the disaster was eventually ruled as an act of God, with no blame on the brewery. Meux & Co., which had lost around £23,000 worth of beer – a considerable sum – was able to claim some compensation, as well as the excise duty, so was saved from bankruptcy. But, since the brewery was found to have done nothing wrong, no compensation was paid to the families of the victims, or to those who had lost their homes and possessions. One anonymous letter written to the *Morning Post* suggested that the explosion had been an accident waiting to happen, registering surprise that such a tragedy had not occurred before.

For months afterwards, the sickly smell of beer hung in the air around St Giles as a constant reminder of the disaster. The brewery continued to operate until its demolition in 1921; the Dominion Theatre now occupies part of the site.

Despite the loss of life of 17 October 1814, some key lessons were learned: the original wooden fermentation tanks were replaced with concrete-lined versions, which started to be used throughout the brewing industry.

However, the St Giles rookery would remain mired in poverty for the next few decades, swelling in size due to a huge influx of immigrants after the Irish Famine of the 1840s. Living conditions remained appalling, and outbreaks of bacterial diseases such as cholera were common and spread rapidly among the many families living in such close quarters. It wasn't until the middle of the 19th century that the slums were finally cleared, making way for New Oxford Street.

ABOVE LEFT: **Revellers from all social classes sample the drinks on offer at a gin palace in St Giles, 1821**

ABOVE RIGHT: **St Giles Circus in the c1920s – a far cry from its slum beginnings**

## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

A LOOK BACK AT THREE OTHER EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN OCTOBER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

### 28 October 312 AD

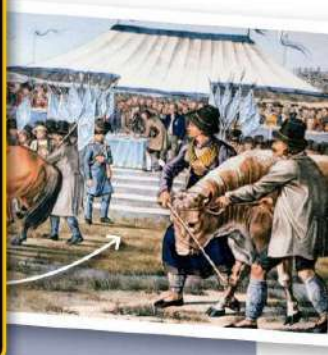
#### CONSTANTINE BEGINS ROME'S PATH TO CHRISTIANITY

During the battle of the Milvian Bridge near Rome, Emperor Constantine I claims to have received a vision from God, promising him victory if he paints the first two letters of Christ's name – in Greek – on his soldiers' shields. Constantine emerges victorious, and by AD 380, Christianity has become the Roman empire's official religion.

### 12 October 1810

#### A ROYAL WEDDING KICKS OFF OKTOBERFEST

After the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig (later King Ludwig I) to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen, the people of Munich are invited to a celebratory horse race and other festivities. The following year the tradition is repeated, and it becomes an annual event. Today, Oktoberfest remains a staple of Bavarian culture, celebrated worldwide.



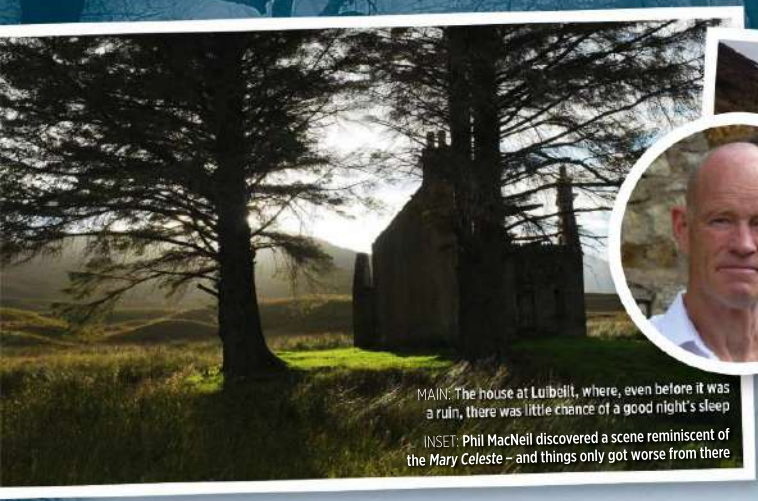
### 31 October 1517

#### MARTIN LUTHER PUBLISHES HIS NINETY-FIVE THESES

German monk Martin Luther pins his *Ninety-five Theses* on the doors of a church in Wittenberg. The text condemns the corruption and excesses of the Roman Catholic Church and Luther is soon branded a heretic. With this act, the Protestant Reformation begins.

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2

# A remote and abandoned house in the middle of nowhere – what could go wrong? BBC Radio's **Danny Robins** investigates a Highlands horror story



MAIN: The house at Luibeilt, where, even before it was a ruin, there was little chance of a good night's sleep

INSET: Phil MacNeil discovered a scene reminiscent of the *Mary Celeste* – and things only got worse from there

Phil's trek through the Scottish Highlands in 1974 took a terrifying turn

On a cold winter's night in the wilds of the Scottish mountains, two young climbers in need of a place to bed down where they can stay warm and dry think they get lucky when they come across an old house. But all is not what it seems. What happened in that remote house is forever carved on the memory of Phil MacNeil. "It was many months before I could sleep without the light on," he says. Phil is 65 now, but, lithe and athletic, looks at least a decade younger. As I meet his piercing blue eyes, it is clear that night has obsessed him for nearly 50 years.

We need to cast our minds back to February 1974. Phil and his friend Jimmy have been tipped off about this place, known as Luibeilt. It's a bothy, a simple dwelling used by climbers and hunters. They've been told it's owned by people happy to let climbers stay the night, but, when they arrive, the two lads have the odd sensation that the house has been abandoned – and in a hurry. The dining table is still set for Christmas dinner, with the crackers unpulled. It has a whiff of the *Mary Celeste*, the 19th-century ghost ship whose occupants vanished, never to be accounted for.

Phil and Jimmy search the house. Upstairs, the rooms are empty except one containing a dismantled metal bed and a large rock sitting on the windowsill. Satisfied that they are alone, the pair make their beds in the living room. They blow out the candles and darkness envelops them. And then they hear it... the bed upstairs – yes, the one that was dismantled – is now sliding across the floor. More unnervingly, the rock falls with a bump and starts to roll around.

## ENTIRELY ALONE?

The pair eventually fall into an uneasy sleep until they are wrenched awake at 4am. "Things in the room were flying around, all over the place," says Phil. I can feel his stunned disbelief even now, as he remembers objects hurtling towards him. The chaos continues until, above them, footsteps start. It sounds like someone in hard shoes, pacing. The steps leave the bedroom and start to come downstairs, closer, closer, until they are by the living room door. Phil grabs his climber's ice axe, ready to confront whoever or whatever – is there, but when he throws open the door... they are entirely alone.

Phil is telling me of his experience for my new BBC podcast, *Uncanny*. The series is full of people who have sent me their stories in the hope that I can help find an answer. Phil's tale is one of the oddest. If you search for the bothy online, you can find pictures of what it used to look like. It's a ruin now, but back in 1974, it felt to Phil that the house itself had come to life.

You'd have assumed that Phil would never go back – his night there ended with him and Jimmy scrambling out of a window and running away, terrified. But, determined to make sense of it, he returned and found on the living room wall graffiti left by another visitor. It read: "Don't sleep here. This house is haunted." It seems Phil is not the only one to have seen the dark side of Luibeilt.

**DANNY ROBINS** is a writer, broadcaster and journalist. He has presented *The Battersea Poltergeist* for BBC Radio 4 and the podcast series *Haunted* for the Panoply Network

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BBC SOUNDS

Danny explores Phil MacNeil's story on his new BBC podcast, *Uncanny*, which launches on 13 October

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VINTAGE

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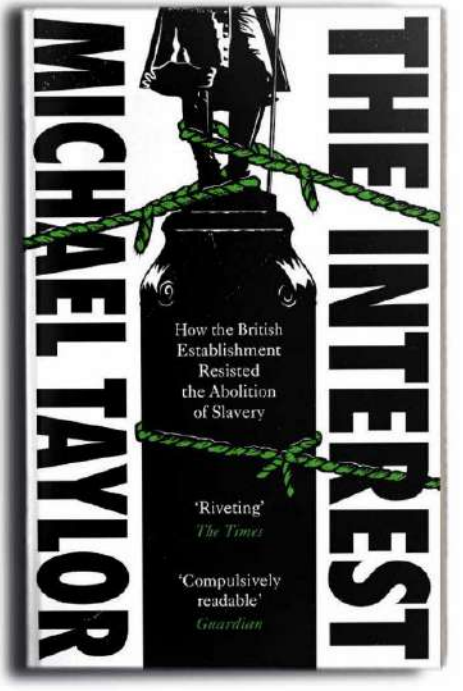


# FOR TWO HUNDRED YEARS THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN BRITAIN HAS BEEN A CAUSE FOR SELF-CONGRATULATION. BUT NO LONGER.

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# The Chinese Civil War

Words: Emma Slattery Williams

### WHAT WAS THE CHINESE CIVIL WAR?

The Chinese Civil War was a series of conflicts between the Communist Party of China and the country's Nationalist government. The war is regarded as having been fought in two distinct stages: between 1927 and 1937, and then again between 1946 and 1949 (the latter a phase often referred to as the Chinese Communist Revolution). Hostilities were largely halted between 1937 and 1945 as the two sides formed a begrudging alliance against Japan, which invaded China and then attempted to create a Pacific empire during World War II.

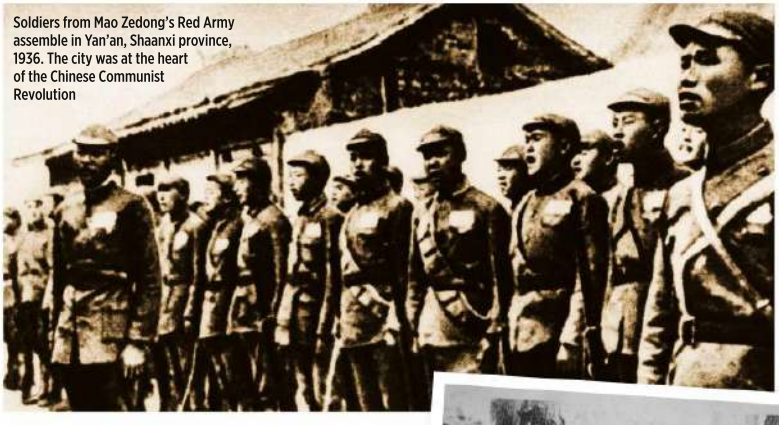
### WHAT WAS THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN CHINA BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR?

After more than 2,000 years of imperial rule, China's last dynasty – the Qing – was overthrown in 1912 and the country became a republic. The new president, Yuan Shikai, imposed a dictatorship and declared himself emperor, but his death in 1916 created a power vacuum that enabled local warlords to seize control of different regions.

In 1924, the Chinese Nationalist Party or Kuomintang (KMT), which had aided the overthrow of the monarchy 12 years earlier, joined forces with the fledgling Communist Party of China (CPC). Together, they formed the First United Front in opposition to the warlords who were trying to take control of northern China. This would lead to the launch of an allied campaign in July 1926 known as the Northern Expedition, led by Chiang Kai-shek of the KMT and the newly formed National Revolutionary Army.

### WHAT WAS THE SHANGHAI MASSACRE?

On 12 April 1927, during the Northern Expedition, Chiang Kai-shek ordered a violent purge of Communists and other leftist groups within Shanghai. Thousands of CPC members were killed during the massacre, marking an end to the First United Front and widening the gulf between the ideological factions that had already emerged within the KMT.



Soldiers from Mao Zedong's Red Army assemble in Yan'an, Shaanxi province, 1936. The city was at the heart of the Chinese Communist Revolution

Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek became China's de facto president in 1928

Thousands of Communists and other leftwing groups were brutally killed on Chiang's orders in 1927

> "The massacre in Shanghai widened the gulf between the ideological factions that had emerged within the KMT"

Soon, the party split altogether, with Chiang forming a rightwing KMT government in Nanking and Wang Jingwei (who opposed the Shanghai killings) retaining control of the KMT's leftwing administration in Wuhan.

### HOW DID THE CIVIL WAR START?

In retaliation for the massacre and other Communist murders, the CPC led an uprising in Nanchang on 1 August 1927, before going on to occupy the city. Although a counterattack saw the Communists defeated, further uprisings and acts of guerrilla warfare continued to break out in opposition to the KMT, soon escalating into full-blown civil war.

One notable incident occurred on 7 September, when Mao Zedong – a founding member of the CPC – led a peasant revolt in his home province of Hunan. Although this, too, was

GETTY IMAGES X3

crushed and Mao was forced to flee, the experience led him to believe that garnering Communist support in China's rural areas was key to defeating the KMT, where it had minimal influence.

### HOW DID CHIANG KAI-SHEK GAIN CONTROL OF CHINA?

Following the breakdown of the First United Front in 1927, China was in the unusual predicament of having three capitals: Beijing, which still was recognised by nations around the world as being the republic's 'true' capital; Wuhan, which was the base of the CPC and Wang Jingwei's KMT; and Nanking, the base of Chiang's KMT.

However, after the rightwing KMT's capture of Wuhan (July 1927) and Beijing (June 1928), Chiang – supported by landowners and businessmen – claimed to have united all of China. The Nationalist administration in Nanking was recognised as the country's legitimate government, and in October, Chiang became the de facto president of the Republic of China.

Despite his victory, Chinese unity would not last. In 1930, a period of violent unrest broke out between the leader and some of his former allies, who challenged the legitimacy of his government and formed a coalition against him. Although Chiang again emerged triumphant, the incident left the Nationalist government on the brink of bankruptcy and drew attention to the party's internal disputes.

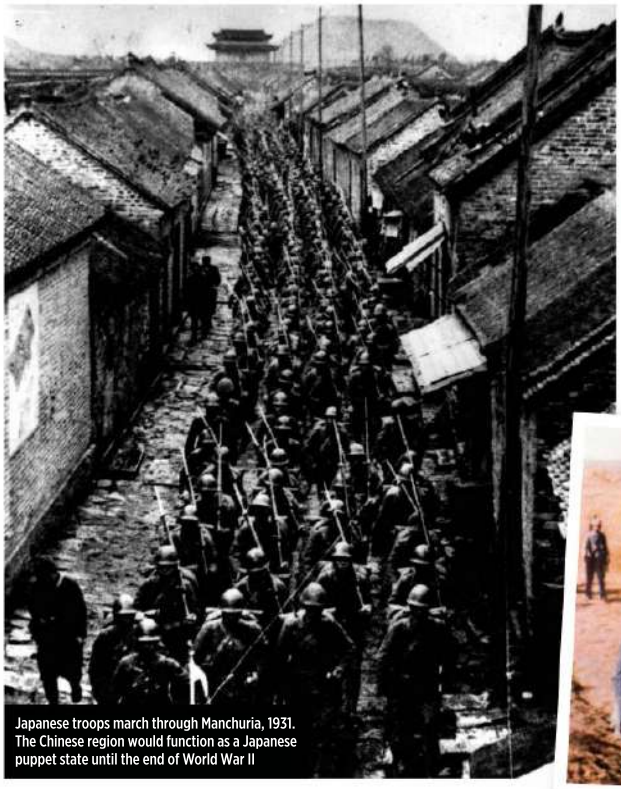
To make matters worse for the KMT, China's neighbour – Japan – was embarking on a period of expansion, and on 18 September 1931, some 40,000 Japanese troops marched into the Chinese region of Manchuria. Despite condemnation from the League of Nations, the Japanese installed a puppet government and placed China's deposed emperor, Pu Yi, in charge.

Meanwhile, Mao established a state known as the Chinese Soviet Republic in the eastern province of Jiangxi. In a bid to crush it, the KMT undertook a series of five 'encirclement' campaigns that left their target surrounded and unable to escape. In order do this, Chiang was forced to assemble the largest army in the KMT's history.

### WHAT WAS THE LONG MARCH?

On 16 October 1934, Mao's Red Army broke through Nationalist lines and undertook a year-long retreat known as the Long March. The 100,000-strong group – which included soldiers as well as administrative personnel and civilians – trekked for some 6,000 miles, navigating snowy mountains and fighting opposing armies along the way. Although only 10 per cent of the marchers survived the journey, they arrived at Yan'an, Shaanxi province, in October 1935, where Mao set about creating another Communist state.

The feat cemented Mao as leader of the CPC, and the heroic efforts of the marchers led many people in China to rally behind the Communist cause. Mao himself went on to declare that the Long March had been "a manifesto, a



Japanese troops march through Manchuria, 1931. The Chinese region would function as a Japanese puppet state until the end of World War II

BOTTOM: **Mao is seen riding on horseback during his famous retreat from Jiangxi**

BELOW: **Around 100,000 people embarked on Mao Zedong's 'Long March' in 1934, but only a fraction survived**

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2

The Rape of Nanking, perpetrated by Japanese troops in December 1927 and January 1928, shocked the world

ABOVE: Mao Zedong declares the birth of the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949

LEFT: An anti-Japanese poster published by China's KMT government

propaganda force... proclaiming to the world that the Red Army is an army of heroes".

### WHY DID THE CPC AND KMT UNITE AGAIN IN 1937?

Taking advantage of the country's internal struggles, Japan attempted to push further into Chinese territory. In a bid to beat back the Japanese advance, a Second United Front was formed between the KMT and the CPC – but only after Chiang was held hostage by two of his generals in December 1936 and forced into making peace with the Communists.

By July 1937, Japan had invaded Beijing, but Mao sensed a new opportunity: by allowing the KMT to bear the brunt of the fighting, he hoped to recruit more people to the Communist cause. Although the Nationalist forces put up a much stronger resistance than had been expected, events such as the Japanese attack on Shanghai in August 1937 took a heavy toll, forcing the KMT to abandon the city.

In December, the Chinese Nationalist capital of Nanking fell to Japan and the population suffered massacres and brutal attacks. In what would become known as the Rape of Nanking, thousands of surrendering soldiers and civilians were killed, with countless women raped. The six-week atrocity shocked foreign observers and Christian missionaries in China, and hardened hostility towards Japan. Public opinion – especially in the United States – fell firmly on the side of China, which would have implications during World War II.

### HOW DID WORLD WAR II AFFECT THE CONFLICT?

Having already signed a military pact with Germany and Italy, Japan formally entered World War II in December 1941 when it launched a surprise attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. In the wake of this destruction, it then set about expanding its empire across Asia and the Pacific.

> "By allowing the KMT to bear the brunt of the fighting, Mao hoped to recruit more people to the Communist cause"

Keen to halt Japan's expansionist ambitions, the KMT and CPC continued to work together. However, the Red Army and the Nationalist forces fought much of World War II separately, and still clashed with each other on occasion in a bid to assert their dominance. After Japan's surrender to the Allies in 1945, China reclaimed all the territories it had previously lost (including Manchuria), but it wouldn't be long until domestic unrest reared its ugly head once again.

### WHAT HAPPENED ONCE WORLD WAR II WAS OVER?

The Chinese Civil War resumed almost as soon as World War II had ended. Negotiations between the CPC and the Nationalists quickly broke down, and in July 1946, Chiang launched an attack on Communist territory.

This time, victory was firmly on the side of the Communists, who were greatly aided by China's peasantry. Whereas Chiang was viewed as being a corrupt leader who did very little to help the lives of the country's poor, Mao had already won their support by paying off their debts and giving them land seized from their landlords. Furthermore, whereas the Communists had suffered around 440,000 casualties during the war with Japan, the KMT had lost a staggering 3.2 million men. Cities thus fell with little resistance, and by June 1949, Beijing, Shanghai, Nanking and Tianjin had all been taken from Nationalist hands.

Following his historic triumph, Mao Zedong became president of the newly created People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949 and remained in power until his death almost 27 years later. His rule – overshadowed by famines, massacres and the purging of China's cultural heritage – remains highly controversial.

### HOW WERE ORDINARY CHINESE CITIZENS AFFECTED BY THE CIVIL WAR?

Atrocities against civilians were carried out by both sides, and some historians estimate that the total number of fatalities could be as high as 7.5 million. The land was ravaged by the conflict, so starvation and diseases were rife.

### WHEN WAS PEACE DECLARED?

No peace treaty or armistice has ever been signed between the two sides of the Chinese Civil War. In December 1949, Chiang fled to the island of Taiwan and established a rival government, declaring Taipei to be the capital of the Republic of China. More than 70 years later, the issue remains complicated; although the People's Republic of China views Taiwan as a breakaway province that must be retaken, many people on the island now regard it to be a separate nation altogether – even though independence has never been formally declared.

**LISTEN**

BBC WORLD SERVICE

An episode of *Witness History* explores the life of Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0595tsn*

# Princess Feodora's relationship with Victoria

Despite often being portrayed as a lonely child, Queen Victoria actually grew up alongside her beloved half-sister, Feodora. So why, asks **Dr Carolyn Harris**, has the German royal faded into obscurity?

As a young child, the future Queen Victoria often walked in Kensington Gardens, wishing onlookers a cheerful "Good morning!". During these walks, her mother Victoire, the Duchess of Kent, held one of her hands. Victoria's older half-sister, Princess Feodora, held the other hand. The trio became a familiar sight and were described by one observer as "a group of exquisite loveliness". While Victoria had a difficult relationship with her mother, she remained close to Feodora throughout her life.

Princess Anna Feodora Augusta Charlotte Wilhelmine of Leiningen was born in Amorbach in Bavaria, Germany, in 1807, the second child of Princess Victoire of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld and Emich Carl, Prince of Leiningen. Feodora and her older brother, also named Carl, spent their early childhood with their mother and maternal grandmother, the Dowager Duchess Augusta of Saxe-Coburg, while their father fought in the Napoleonic Wars.

Emich Carl died in 1814; four years later Victoire remarried, to Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn, the fourth son of King George III. While her son remained in Leiningen, Feodora accompanied her mother and new stepfather to Britain in 1819.

## BUILDING A DYNASTY

The Duke enjoyed the company of children and treated Feodora as his own. Feodora later wrote to Victoria, "I loved our father... I loved him dearly" and mourned his death in 1820. Like Victoria, Feodora resented being isolated at Kensington Palace and she shared Victoria's dislike of John Conroy, advisor to the Duchess of Kent. As Victoria grew older, Feodora encouraged her efforts to assume greater independence from their mother's control – in contrast with their brother, Carl, who favoured an extended regency by the Duchess of Kent.

As the half-sister of the heiress presumptive to the British throne, Feodora's marriage prospects were a subject of popular interest and there were even rumours that Victoria's uncle, the ageing King George IV, might marry her in the hope of fathering a direct heir of his own. But Feodora was eventually married to Prince Ernst I of Hohenlohe-Langenburg. Although Ernst and Feodora only met twice before their engagement, and Ernst had little income as his principality had been absorbed into the kingdom of Württemberg in 1806, Feodora was eager to be married and leave Kensington Palace.

The future Queen Victoria with her mother, Victoire, who had given birth to Princess Feodora during her previous marriage

Feodora and Ernst had six children and their present-day descendants include King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden and King Felipe VI of Spain. Their third child, Victor, Count Gleichen, settled in Britain and married into the British aristocracy; he and his children remained close to Queen Victoria's children and grandchildren, and frequently attended British royal events into the 20th century.

Victoria and Feodora exchanged letters throughout their lives, often turning to one another for advice and support. As Feodora's biographer Harold A Albert observed, "She reasoned with Victoria, argued with her, persuaded her and occasionally quarrelled with her". As Feodora was based in Germany, she could keep Victoria informed about events in Europe, and they shared their mutual admiration for the works of Charles Dickens.

## A LIFELONG BOND

Feodora visited Britain on numerous occasions during Victoria's reign, attending the queen's coronation in 1838 and spending an extended period at the British court in 1848 following the political upheaval in Europe. Victoria and Albert named their youngest daughter Beatrice Mary Victoria Feodore in Feodora's honour.

Victoria and Feodora were widowed around the same time, as Ernst died in 1860 and Albert died in 1861. Victoria hoped they might live together as widows in Britain but, although she was sympathetic to Victoria's circumstances, Feodora valued her autonomy and decided to remain in Germany, declaring: "I cannot give up my house nor my independence at my age."

Fedora died in September 1872, aged 64, the cause of death believed by the attending physician to be cancer. Queen Victoria, whose own son (the future Edward VII) had just recovered from typhoid fever, was deeply saddened by the news, writing in her journal: "My own darling, only sister, my dear excellent, noble Feodora is no more!... I stand so alone now, no near and dear one near my own age, or older, to whom I could look up, left! All, all gone!"

After Feodora's death, Victoria commissioned a volume of her letters for private circulation within the royal family, but because the editors of her correspondence had little interest in letters that the queen received from other women, Victoria's beloved half-sister faded into obscurity in popular memory.

**DR CAROLYN HARRIS** is an instructor in history at the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies. She is co-editor of the forthcoming book series *English Consorts: Power, Influence, Dynasty* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022)

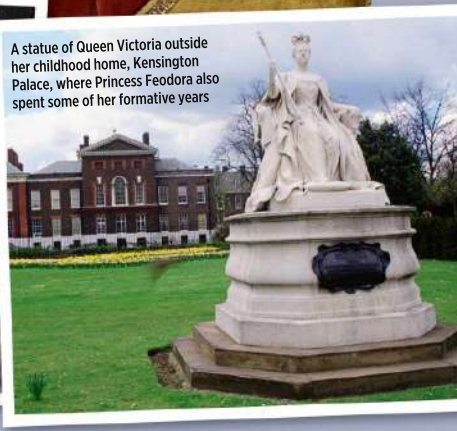
GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2

A young Princess Feodora painted by George Dawe in 1818. The Bavarian-born royal would settle in Britain with her mother the following year

**"Victoria and Feodora exchanged letters throughout their lives, often turning to one another for advice and support"**

RIGHT: A portrait of Princess Feodora's brother (and Queen Victoria's half-brother), Prince Carl. He would briefly serve as prime minister of the German empire in 1848

CENTRE: Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, Princess Beatrice, was given the middle name 'Feodore' in honour of the queen's German half-sibling



A statue of Queen Victoria outside her childhood home, Kensington Palace, where Princess Feodora also spent some of her formative years

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PODCAST

Professor Marisa Linton discusses the French Revolution on the HistoryExtra podcast: *historyextra.com/french-rev-everything*

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YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE

# FRENCH REVOLUTION

Vive la République! This rallying cry often springs to mind when we think of the upheaval that France went through at the end of the 18th century. After more than eight centuries of monarchy, the absolute rule of kings in the ancien régime came to a brutal end as the people called for change.

The French Revolution would not be a peaceful transition of power, though, and thousands met their end on the guillotine – among them the anointed king himself, Louis XVI, and his wife Marie Antoinette. Yet the First French Republic would not last long before the highly successful military commander Napoleon Bonaparte spotted his opportunity and engineered a coup. Having beheaded their monarch in the name of "Liberté, égalité, fraternité", the French people ultimately ended up under the rule of a dictator.

Aided by expert Professor Marisa Linton, we uncover how and why these dramatic events unfolded. Turn the page to follow France's move from monarchy to republic...


**30 Road to revolution**
Key dates in France's transition from absolute monarchy to republic

**32 Everything you wanted to know about the French Revolution**
Professor Marisa Linton answers our questions on what drove the people of France to revolt in the late 18th century

**36 Causes of the revolution**
From an incompetent monarch to failing harvests and heavy taxation, France was ripe for change

**40 The storming of the Bastille**
The 1789 attack on the Parisian prison was the spark that ignited revolution

**42 The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen**
Discover the groundbreaking document that defined individual and collective rights for men

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French women participated in almost every aspect of the revolution

**46 Symbols of a new France**
Symbols, including a new flag, helped forge the identity of revolutionary France

**48 The final days of Marie Antoinette**
Inside the gruelling two months that preceded the French queen's execution

**52 Robespierre and the Terror**
Robespierre presided over one of the bloodiest chapters in France's history, but even he wasn't safe from the 'national razor'

**56 The rise of Napoleon**
How the political turmoil allowed a Corsican lieutenant to seize power and become emperor of France

**MARISA LINTON** is professor emerita of history at Kingston University and an expert on the French Revolution, 18th-century politics and the Enlightenment. Her forthcoming book, *Terror: The French Revolution and its Demons*, co-written with Michel Biard, will be available in December 2021, published by Polity Press

# ROAD TO REVOL

## How France went from a monarchy to a republic to an empire

WORDS: EMMA SLATTERY WILLIAMS

### 17 MARCH 1778

▼ Britain declares war on France in the American Revolutionary War. French money, troops, weaponry and ships help America achieve independence from Britain, but saddle France with debt.

### 5 MAY 1789

Summoned by Louis XVI, the Estates-General is convened for the first time since 1614. Representatives of the three estates – the clergy (First Estate), the nobility (Second Estate) and the majority of the people (Third Estate) – are in attendance.

### 20 JUNE 1789

▲ Members of the Third Estate take the Tennis Court Oath, pledging never to separate until a written constitution has been established in France.

### 24–25 JUNE 1789

▲ The Duke of Orléans and many members of the nobility and clergy choose to join the National Assembly, the revolutionary assembly formed by representatives of the Third Estate on 17 June.

### 21 SEPTEMBER 1792

▼ The French monarchy is officially abolished; the First French Republic is founded the following day.

### 2–6 SEPTEMBER 1792

▲ The so-called September Massacres take place, with more than a thousand prisoners in Paris killed because of fears they are planning to join a counter-revolutionary plot.

### 10 AUGUST 1792

▼ After months of increasing tension between Louis XVI and the Legislative Assembly, the Tuileries Palace – where the royal family is being held – is stormed by armed revolutionaries.

### 21 JANUARY 1793

▼ Found guilty of treason by the National Convention of France (successor to the Legislative Assembly), Louis XVI is executed by guillotine.

### SEPT 1793 – JULY 1794

▲ Thousands of enemies of the revolution – whether real or perceived – are rounded up and executed during a period of violence known as the Terror.

### 16 OCTOBER 1793

▼ Queen Marie Antoinette is found guilty of treason and executed by guillotine.

### 27–28 JULY 1794

▼ Revolutionary and figurehead of the Terror Maximilien Robespierre is arrested and executed. A period commonly known as the Thermidorian Reaction begins.

GETTY IMAGES X6 ALAMY X12

# UTION

## 27 JUNE 1789

Louis XVI is forced to give in and orders delegates of the First and Second Estates to unite with the Third Estate in the National Assembly. The same day, the king orders the army to mobilise outside both Paris and Versailles.

## 14 JULY 1789

◀ A crowd attacks the Bastille in Paris – the royal fortress and prison that has become a symbol of the monarchy's dictatorial rule. Hoping to seize the ammunition stores within, the angry crowds seize the building and kill the prison governor.

## 26 AUGUST 1789

▶ The National Constituent Assembly (formed from the National Assembly) adopts *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, a charter of human liberties inspired by Enlightenment thinkers and the American Declaration of Independence.

## 20 APRIL 1792

The Legislative Assembly (France's governing body under the Constitution of 1791) declares war on Austria – which had declared its support for Louis XVI in August 1791 – after that country refuses to recall its troops from the French border.

## 20–21 JUNE 1791

▲ While trying to escape France, the royal family are arrested at Varennes and returned to the capital, where they are confined in the Tuileries Palace.

## 5–6 OCTOBER 1789

▼ A riot nearly breaks out among a group of women in Paris over the price of bread. It grows into a mass march on Versailles, where they force their demands on the king and make him and his family return to Paris.

## 2 NOVEMBER 1795

▼ The French Directory comes to power, consisting of an executive branch (the Five Directors) and a legislative branch (the Corps Législatif). It will rule for four years.

## 9 NOVEMBER 1799

General Napoleon Bonaparte establishes himself as First Consul of France after leading a successful coup against the French Directory.

## 18 MAY 1804

▼ France is proclaimed an empire, with Napoleon crowning himself emperor later that year. ⊙

# *Everything you wanted to know about*

# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

**Professor Marisa Linton** answers key questions about one of the most turbulent chapters in France's history

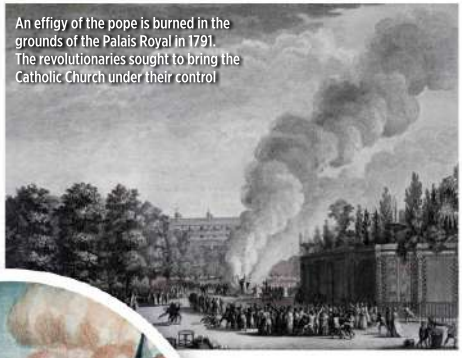
**Q: Was the revolution in France inevitable?**

**A:** I wouldn't say it was inevitable, because, prior to the revolution, very few people in France could have anticipated that such a thing would happen. At the time, France was the most powerful regime in western Europe. It was wealthy, or at least it appeared so; it had a big army; it was very stable; and it had had an autocratic monarchy for centuries. Yet there were underlying problems in the country and it was these problems that brought about the revolution (*see page 36*).

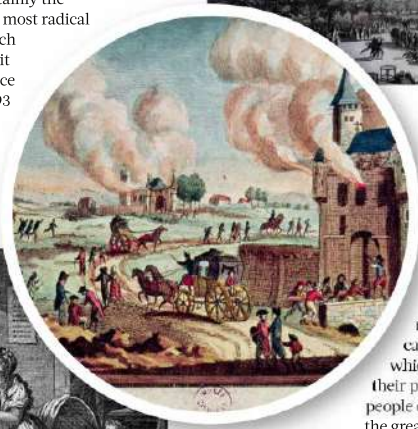
**Q: Was it only Paris that was affected by the revolution, or did the unrest spread across France?**

**A:** The revolution affected the entire country, but in different ways. Everybody was very well aware of what was happening, even before the Estates-General [the representative assembly of the three estates] met in 1789. The electoral process of selecting deputies to attend the Estates-General helped to politicise people, and books of grievances were drawn up, giving people the chance to say what they thought was wrong with the old regime. So the French people had begun to be politicised from May 1789 onwards, really.

Paris was certainly the epicentre of the most radical part of the French Revolution and it was also the place where, from 1793 onwards, the guillotine was situated. So those living outside the capital didn't always understand the revolution in the same way that Parisians did.



An effigy of the pope is burned in the grounds of the Palais Royal in 1791. The revolutionaries sought to bring the Catholic Church under their control



ABOVE: **The Great Fear saw French peasants revolt against their huge tax burdens**

LEFT: **Citizens of the Vendée faced a revolutionary army after rejecting the Parisian version of revolution**

It also depends on which revolution we're talking about. In the summer of 1789, peasants – mostly in northern France – had wanted their own revolution. For them, the main problem was that they were caught up in a semi-feudal regime, which saw them paying dues to their principally noble overlords. These people of the Third Estate were paying the great bulk of French taxation, which was incredibly unjust and onerous. So, these peasants started their own revolution, known as the Great Fear; they burned down châteaux and they destroyed the records of feudal dues, hoping that in doing so, they wouldn't have to pay them anymore. So at that point, peasants outside the capital really wanted revolution, but perhaps a rather

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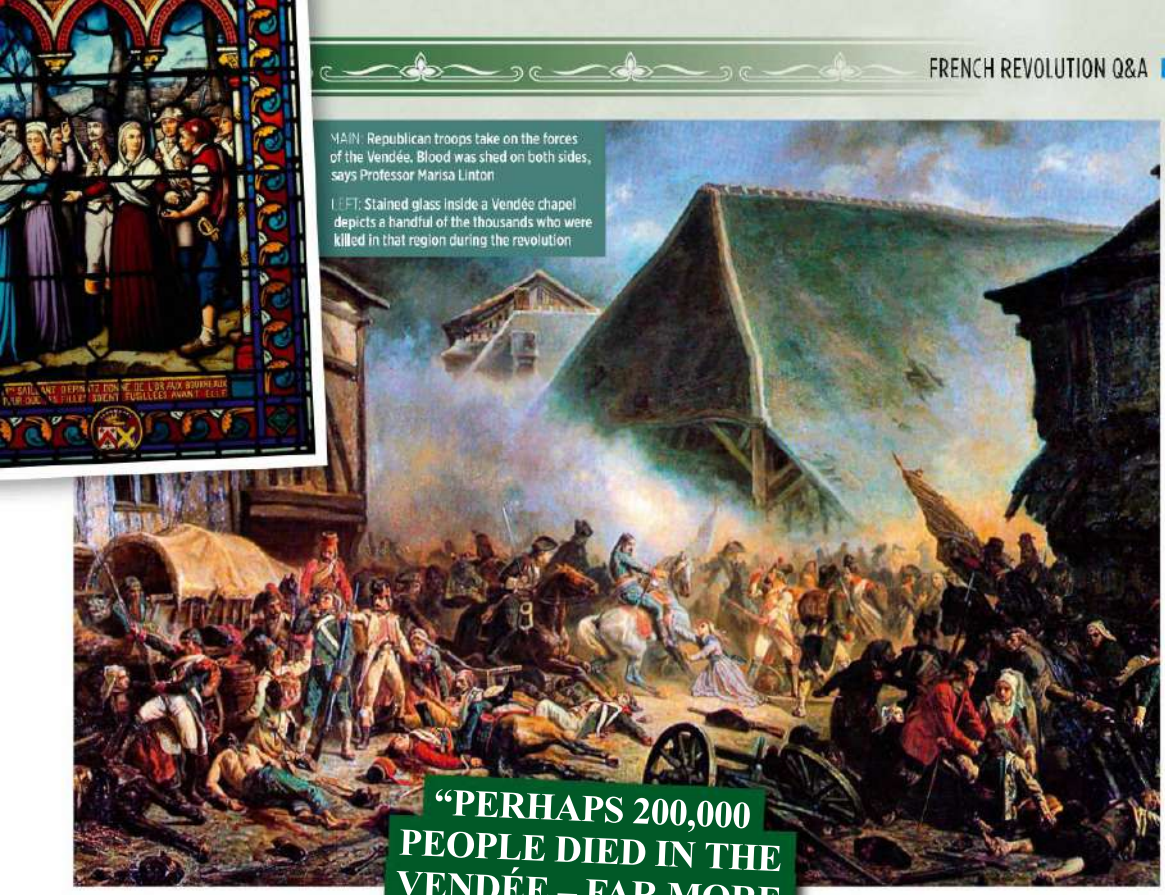

MAIN: Republican troops take on the forces of the Vendée. Blood was shed on both sides, says Professor Marisa Linton

LEFT: Stained glass inside a Vendée chapel depicts a handful of the thousands who were killed in that region during the revolution

**"PERHAPS 200,000 PEOPLE DIED IN THE VENDÉE – FAR MORE THAN DIED BY THE GUILLOTINE"**

different revolution to those living in Paris, and over time that divergence between Paris and the provinces became greater.

One of the biggest problems of the French Revolution was what should be done about the Catholic Church. The revolutionaries made the ultimately fateful decision to bring the Catholic Church under revolutionary control, essentially making members of the clergy swear an oath of loyalty to the revolution, and this proved an incredibly divisive decision. The majority of people in France at this time were Catholic, and something like half the clergy refused swear loyalty to the revolution. It created a huge division between loyalty to the Catholic Church and loyalty to the revolution. I think one of the biggest mistakes the revolutionaries made was to nationalise church property to pay for their continuing financial problems.

In the spring of 1793, a whole area of western France, starting with the Vendée, revolted against the Parisian version of the revolution. And they did that partly for religious reasons, but also because they didn't want to be forced to go and fight to defend France. They felt that the revolution had cheated them and not given them what they wanted. The unrest eventually turned into a terrible civil war between the peasants of the Vendée and the Parisian version of the revolution, and it was actually in the Vendée where the great majority of the people who died during the revolution met their deaths.

It's not known for sure how many people died because many were displaced, but an awful lot of people were massacred, with violence on both sides, and the Republican Army was sent in to fight the peasants. Perhaps 200,000 people died in the Vendée in total, over a long period time – far more than died by the guillotine in Paris, and yet it's the guillotine that everybody knows and remembers.

### Q: Did the Enlightenment influence the revolution?

**A:** Well, it did and it didn't. The Enlightenment did not make the revolution happen – the collapse of the old regime came about through a financial crisis, which had nothing to do with ideas and everything to do with money, credit, patronage and privilege. But once the old regime had collapsed, the ideas of Enlightenment philosophers become very important to the revolutionaries when they were deciding what kind of regime they wanted in place. You only have to look at the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, issued in August 1789, to see how influential the ideas of the Enlightenment were in terms of notions of equality, of liberty, of freedom of opinion.

The revolutionaries instated equality before the law, which had not existed before the revolution, so they owed much to the philosophers of the Enlightenment. But that's not to say that all philosophers wanted revolution; there was no Karl Marx plotting away before the French Revolution broke out. And there was no blueprint for revolution; it happened first and then the revolutionaries decided what they wanted to do with the situation in which they found themselves. ▶

ABOVE: **Louis XVI preferred hunting, lock-making and carpentry to his kingly duties**

LEFT: **The ideas of Enlightenment philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau are often credited with inspiring the French Revolution**

**"KING LOUIS XVI TOOK REFUGE IN OVEREATING AND EXCESSIVE DRINKING"**

The Enlightenment shaped many assumptions about liberty and equality, but it certainly didn't *cause* the revolution. Even Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78), the Genevan philosopher who is sometimes credited with inciting the revolution through his ideas, declared that revolution was not worth a single life. I don't think he would have approved of the French Revolution had he been alive when it happened.

### Q: Could the revolution have been prevented by a stronger king?

**A:** Very possibly, yes. France at this time was such an autocratic regime, with one man holding power in his hands; if that man had a weakness then it affected everything. Louis XVI inherited a financial and political system that was badly in need of reform, and that was not his fault. But he wasn't nearly ruthless or decisive enough to be a good autocratic ruler. He became king at the age of 19 and he was very aware of his own inadequacy. There's an assumption often made about Louis XVI that he was a bit stupid, but this is far from the truth. He was an intelligent and hardworking man, and he tried to do his duty as he saw it. But he wasn't the kind of man who could think outside the box, so when the old regime started to crumble, he had no clue what to do about it.

What's more, from about the time of the failure of the Assembly of Notables in 1787 [an advisory council summoned to advise the monarch in times of crisis], it looks as though Louis experienced what we might now describe as a breakdown. He withdrew from a lot of the decision making and took refuge in overeating and excessive drinking and hunting, not really facing up to what was happening. This was really bad policy on his part, as was listening too much to his wife, Marie Antoinette, because she certainly didn't give him very good advice!

### Q: What impact did Louis' death have on public opinion inside and outside of France?

**A:** Louis' execution was like a gauntlet that the revolutionaries threw down in front of the monarchists and crowned heads of Europe. It was a supremely important gesture. They could have imprisoned the king, but then he would have been a focus for future uprisings, or they could have sent him into exile. But again, that would have run the risk of him returning with an army against the revolutionaries. And so they made the monumental decision to kill him.

Some revolutionaries wanted the decision about whether to execute the king to be put to the French people, but that could well have backfired: I think it's pretty certain that if they had asked the wider public, the peasantry of France, what they wanted to be done with the king, they would not have said to kill him. But within Paris itself, there was

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huge hostility towards Louis, and many people were really quite indifferent to his fate. As one revolutionary said of the king: "We loved him. We trusted him. But he never loved us. He never cared for us." They really felt betrayed after the royal family secretly fled Paris in June 1791; Louis helped seal his own fate with that terrible move.

The execution of the king also had huge repercussions outside France; not least, it brought the British into the war because they did not like this example of crowned monarchs being executed. And it greatly radicalised the position of opponents of the war. But Louis' own brothers, who had emigrated by this time, did nothing to save him. He was pretty much hung out to dry, I think.

The royal couple eventually had four children together, three of whom are shown here. But Marie Antoinette's heart truly belonged to Count Axel von Fersen (*inset*)

## Q: What was Marie Antoinette's role in the revolution? Did she really say "let them eat cake"?

**A:** I don't know any serious historian who credits the "let them eat cake" story. Marie Antoinette did not say it and we know that because Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his *Confessions* refers to an old story of a princess who was so out of touch with her own people that, when she was told that they were starving and did not have bread, declared "Oh, let them eat cake".

Marie Antoinette may not be guilty of that saying, but she had other faults. There were many problems with her as queen insofar as she had very little idea what the lives of ordinary French people were like. In fact, within the grounds of Versailles, she built her own, romanticised version of a French village – *Hameau de la Reine* (The Queen's Hamlet) – in an idyllic, rustic style, complete with farmhouse, meadowland and water mill. No French peasant would have actually lived anywhere like this, but here the queen could escape with her friends and play at being a shepherdess.

There were many other problems, too. One was that Marie Antoinette had a terrible reputation within France, partly because she and her husband had taken several years to consummate their marriage; Louis had a physical impediment but it was his wife who was blamed. They did have children eventually, but by then the assumption had been made that she was promiscuous, which wasn't true. The only man that the queen may have had an affair with was Axel von Fersen, a Swedish count with whom, it seems, she was very much in love with.

*Hameau de la Reine* at the Palace of Versailles was Marie Antoinette's extravagant take on rural life

The fact that Marie Antoinette was Austrian didn't help her case, either; France and Austria were old enemies and to many people, she was still an advocate of Austrian interests within France. People were even suspicious of the fact that Louis didn't take mistresses, as was expected of a king at the time.

Marie Antoinette was very politically reactionary, and she advocated some incredibly bad political decisions, including the disastrous flight from Paris that helped to break people's faith in the monarchy. There was no question, really, that she would be found guilty and executed once the move had been taken to put her on trial.

**INTERVIEW: SPENCER MIZEN**
**WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN**

ABOVE: **The decision to execute Louis XVI sent shockwaves around Europe**

LEFT: **Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette's failed attempt to flee Paris in June 1791 broke people's faith in the monarchy**

**MARISA LINTON** is professor emerita at Kingston University and an expert on the French Revolution, 18th-century politics and the Enlightenment

# *What were the* CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION?

A more enlightened way of thinking, an unfair political system, financial crises and a weak king all combined to form a perfect revolutionary storm

## THE ESTATES SYSTEM

Up until the dawn of revolution, in the era now known as the ancien régime, France was divided into three clear social classes, or estates. The First Estate was occupied by the Roman Catholic clergy. In the second half of the 18th century, it numbered around 130,000 in a wider population of around 28 million. Despite being an extremely wealthy institution that owned a significant portion of land, the Church paid virtually no taxes.

The Second Estate was a larger class, around 400,000 in size, and consisted of members of the French nobility. No one could become part of the Second Estate on merit; you were simply born into it or, as one of the bourgeoisie, you bought a venal office from the state (such as a seat on a *parlement*, a court that turned royal decrees into law). Collectively, members of the Second Estate owned between 20 and 30 per cent of the land, but, again, were largely exempt from paying taxes.

The Third Estate was the strata in which the vast remainder of people found themselves. It was a broad cross-section, from the bourgeoisie at its pinnacle to peasant farmers at the bottom, the latter of whom accounted for around 85 per cent of the population. Bankers to beggars and lawyers to labourers, the Third Estate paid almost all of France's taxes, with peasant farmers disproportionately taxed, regardless of the quality of that summer's harvest.

A 1789 caricature of the three estates, showing the Third being crushed by the First and Second under a rock of taxes

Whether well-heeled professionals living in grand houses or Paris' poverty-stricken poor squeezed into squat, ill-fitting accommodation, the Third Estate was united in its lack of political power. The capitalist middle class were particularly aggrieved. They were the drivers of the French economy and desired to become accepted as part of the Second Estate, but the absence of birthright denied them easy access. They had the accoutrements of success, but not the political clout, instead being subject to the policies and laws determined by the monarchy and the favoured nobles.

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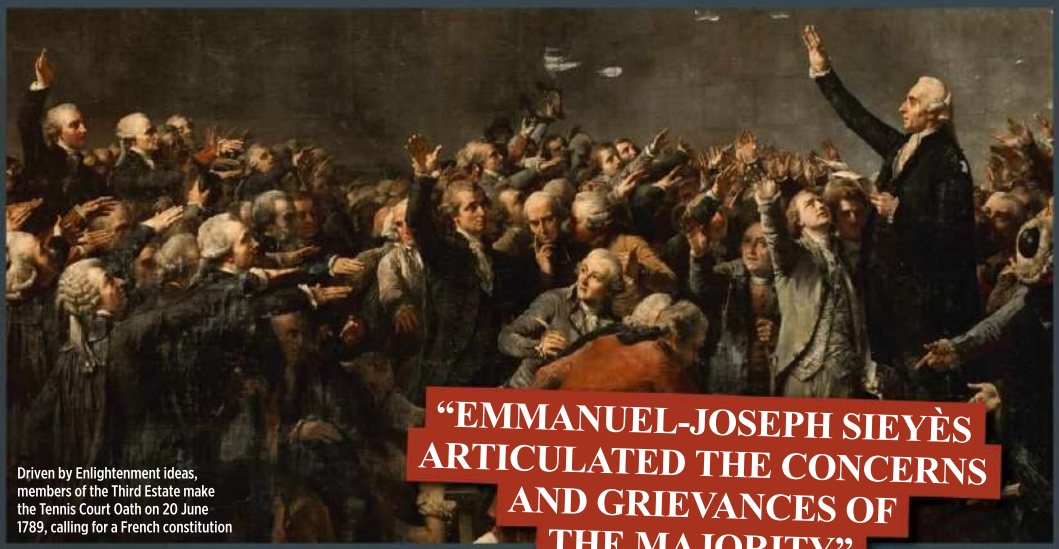


Driven by Enlightenment ideas, members of the Third Estate make the Tennis Court Oath on 20 June 1789, calling for a French constitution

**"EMMANUEL-JOSEPH SIEYÈS ARTICULATED THE CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES OF THE MAJORITY"**

## THE ENLIGHTENMENT

An intellectual movement that gained huge momentum across Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, the Enlightenment fundamentally reshaped social, political and economic life. It concerned itself with the application of reason, liberalism, liberty and equality to everyday society, in order to foster a fairer and more progressive way of living.

One of its greatest influences was in the political arena, where some thinkers argued for representative government based on a constitution, rather than lawmakers being decided upon by heredity and privilege.

Stymied by a lack of political leverage, France's educated bourgeoisie – lawyers, doctors, financiers and such like – were beginning to develop notions of constitutional government. They were quite possibly looking enviously across the Atlantic where the newly minted United States had shed its colonial chains and established a democratic system of government. They were certainly reading and discussing the ideas of political philosophers like John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Baron de Montesquieu.

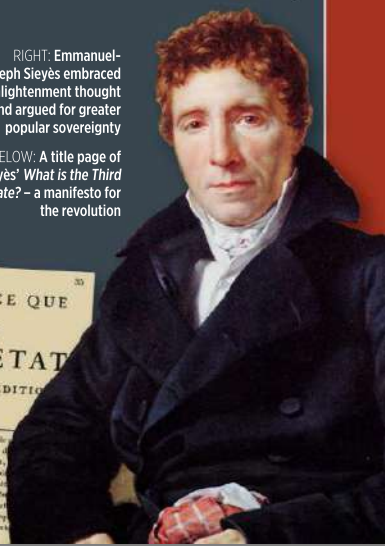
Pamphlets were published and circulated spreading the collective disquiet towards the rigidity of French society. One proved especially significant. In January 1789, a clergyman named Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès published *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers-État?* (What is the Third Estate?) Like others, he challenged the traditional model of French government, but did so in the clearest, most unambiguous fashion. Sieyès became engaged with political philosophy – particularly that of Locke – during his studies as a student of theology, and became increasingly frustrated by the ascendancy through the ranks of the Church of those born into nobility, regardless of their skills or talents.

The English philosopher John Locke is commonly regarded as the 'father of liberalism'

Inspired by Thomas Paine, himself a key influencer whose work had directly contributed to the American Revolution, Sieyès called for the majority to have a say politically: "What is the Third Estate? Everything. What has it been hitherto in the political order? Nothing. What does it desire to be? Something."

By deploying straightforward, inarguable logic, Sieyès articulated the concerns and grievances of the majority of the French population, irrespective of their economic level. To him, the Third Estate had always been the victim of a system of government that had never represented them and a nobility with only self-interest at its heart. Not for nothing was *What is the Third Estate?* later described as "a script for revolution".

In an attempt to carry out financial reforms and impose more taxes on the privileged nobility, King Louis XVI re-established the Estates-General, a general assembly that represented the three estates and which hadn't been used since 1614. However, when representatives of the Third Estate discovered that the voting rights within the assembly would be the same as in earlier incarnations – meaning that the First and Second Estates could outvote the Third by a simple majority – they re-badged themselves as the revolutionary National Assembly and took a pledge of unity – known as the Tennis Court Oath – across their various social strata: "not to separate, and to reassemble wherever circumstances require, until the constitution of the kingdom is established". ▶



RIGHT: **Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès embraced Enlightenment thought and argued for greater popular sovereignty**

BELOW: **A title page of Sieyès' *What is the Third Estate?* – a manifesto for the revolution**

# ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

When it came to industrial development in the late 18th century, France was not as advanced as nations like Britain. The country's agricultural sector was the foundation of its economy and the source of a substantial portion of its taxation revenue, meaning that the slow-moving economy, although enjoying buoyant colonial trade, was vulnerable to whatever the weather had in store for the farmers. As half of the rural peasantry either had no land or worked a small plot, poor harvests could be crippling – and that is exactly what happened during the 1770s and 80s. The winters of 1787 and 1788 were freezing and austere, with the latter being particularly brutal. Grain reserves were ruined by the plummeting temperatures, while weather conditions presented huge obstacles in the transportation of crops and foodstuffs around the country as roads were blocked by snowfall and rivers froze over.

Worse was to come, though. When the snow melted with the arrival of spring, the farmers found their fields underwater; a second disastrous harvest was inevitable. This would exacerbate the sharp rise in the cost of flour, and therefore intensify the higher prices for bread. In fact, bread became such an expensive commodity that nine-tenths of the daily wage of a labourer or peasant farmer was spent on bread alone. And as the price rocketed, it was accompanied by a 25 per cent drop in real wages. Something had to give.

On 5 October 1789, the high prices of bread led a group of women in Paris to storm the Hôtel de Ville (as seen in this illustration). Their numbers swelling into the thousands, they then marched on Versailles

# FINANCIAL CRISES

In the years that preceded the Revolution, France's economy was in a parlous state, close to bankruptcy. Support of the United States in the American Revolutionary War (1775–83) had cost 1.3 billion livres – more than twice the collected annual revenue – while the earlier Seven Years' War (1756–63) against Britain had cost around 1.8 billion livres and the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48), 1 billion livres.

While France's desire to remain a significant player on the world stage was an ardent as ever, its grossly iniquitous tax system couldn't possibly deliver the revenue required. Reform was urgently needed. While all citizens, regardless of status, were technically required to pay the *vingtième* (one-twentieth) tax from its introduction in 1749, many in the First and Second Estates won exemption, and the tax did little to plug the void in the Crown's coffers.

By the mid-1780s, France's national debt had reached 4 billion livres, a figure added to each year by a deficit of 100 million livres. Thanks to inadequate levels of taxation, France was forced to borrow heavily, but that, too, was costly. Without a national bank, the government depended on private institutions charging high interests, which saw France pay nearly twice as much interest on loans as Britain.

Higher taxation was the only way to avoid financial catastrophe, but the Third Estate bore the vast bulk of the burden, including the *gabelle*, the unpopular salt tax. Louis XVI's repeated attempts to raise revenue through tax reform were continually batted back by *parlements* wishing to see the Second Estate, of which they were part, remain largely free from taxation. In an attempt to break the deadlock, the king invoked an Assembly of Notables – an advisory council of clergymen and nobles – in 1787. Again, self interest weighed heavier than the national cause and the deadlock remained.

The architect of the king's proposals, finance minister Charles-Alexandre de Calonne, was furious at the intransigence, and published the public finances in an attempt to show how close to financial rock bottom France was. Although galvanising public outrage, his idea wasn't watertight for him personally. A predictably annoyed monarch, unwilling for the population to see how dire the situation was, dismissed Calonne from his position.

LEFT: French involvement in numerous wars, most recently the American Revolutionary War, had left the country in severe debt

RIGHT: Charles Alexandre de Calonne attempted to introduce new taxes on the First and Second Estates; his ultimate failure saw him exiled from France

Louis XVI presided over a session of the Assembly of Notables in 1787, but virtually no one was interested in tax reform

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# AN INEFFECTUAL MONARCHY

Louis XVI was still a teenager when he succeeded his grandfather to the throne in 1774, and he inherited a nation in spiralling turmoil financially, politically and socially. The young Louis believed himself to be ill-equipped to lead France onto more stable ground. His personality was defined by indecision and conservatism at a time when the country needed strong leadership. A despotic monarch he certainly was not. Indeed, few of Louis' predecessors would have declared that they "must always consult public opinion; it is never wrong," as he did.

This lack of leadership, allied to the revelations about the woeful public finances and the ideals of the Enlightenment, caused many in France to consider alternatives to absolute monarchy. Furthermore, the public disdain for Louis' queen, the Austrian archduchess Marie Antoinette, went undisguised. Suspected of being supportive of her native Austria (one of France's greatest enemies during the second half of the 18th century), the queen was accused of adultery, incest and homosexuality, making her a target for the relentless ridicule of the satirists of the day.

Marie Antoinette was widely known as Madame Déficit on account of her largely uncontrolled spending. She even had an immaculately appointed theatre installed in the continually upgraded Palace of Versailles. Such lavish fripperies when France was staring into a financial abyss served only to turn up the heat on the monarchy. Versailles became a symbol of its decadence, as well as the destination of a weapon-toting underclass with insurrection on their minds. ⊙

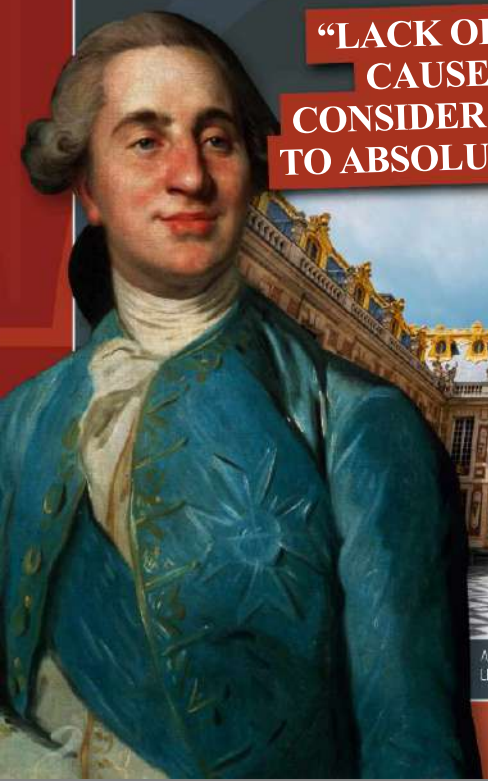
**WORDS: NIGE TASSELL**

ah! Le Maudit animal il m'a tant Peiné pour l'engraisser, il est si gras,
qu'il en en est Ladre, je reviens du marché, je ne sais plus qu'en faire.

Caricaturists were not kind to the weak-willed Louis XVI, depicting the king as an animal or "cursed beast"

For her opulence, Marie Antoinette was a much-despised figure at the top of the ancien régime, and a target for the revolutionaries

**"LACK OF LEADERSHIP CAUSED MANY TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO ABSOLUTE MONARCHY"**



ABOVE: To many, the extravagant Palace of Versailles was a symbol of the excesses of the French monarchy
LEFT: Louis XVI did not have the temperament to be a despotic king, and came to the throne with France in turmoil

# PRISON BREAK

The storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 was not merely a revolt, but the spark that lit the touch paper of revolution

INSET: **The Bastille's governor, Bernard-René Jourdan de Launay, had been in charge of the prison fortress for 13 years**

MAIN: **Nearly a thousand people are thought to have descended on the Bastille on 14 July 1789**

As dawn broke over the Bastille on 14 July 1789, Bernard-René Jourdan de Launay – governor of the 400-year-old royal fortress – must have sensed that this was to be a day like no other.

How could he have thought otherwise? For days now, a mob had rampaged through the streets of Paris, clashing with royal troops, attacking properties owned by the clergy, and looting food and weaponry.

De Launay would, no doubt, have looked on with alarm at the chaos unfolding around him from his vantage point near the River Seine. Yet, for all the mayhem, not even de Launay could have guessed the sheer power of the storm that was set to break over him. For the governor was about to play a central role in the defining moment of the French Revolution. He was to be the fall guy in an event now known as the storming of the Bastille.

If revolution was in the air in 1789, it certainly wasn't 13 years earlier when de Launay became governor of the Bastille. France was one of Europe's oldest and apparently most stable monarchies, its ruler, King Louis XVI, seemingly holding the nation in a vice-like grip.

But over the following decade, soaring unemployment, rocketing taxes, and the insouciance of the nobility at the sufferings of the poor had undermined the people's faith in their leaders. When a series of harvests failed in the late 1780s, obedience gave way to revolutionary rage.

By May 1789, Louis XVI had summoned France's ancient Estates-General for the first time in more than 175 years, hoping it would agree to financial and tax reform and help the French state out of bankruptcy.

## A CALL TO ARMS

When this failed, Louis took two decisions that would bring revolution to the streets of Paris. First, he gave orders for troops (many of them foreign) to assemble around Versailles and Paris. Then, on 11 June, he dismissed his popular minister, Jacques Necker, who had shown sympathy for the calls for reform.

In the French capital, Louis' double move fanned the flames of an already feverish atmosphere. With rumours of a conservative coup swirling, the people of

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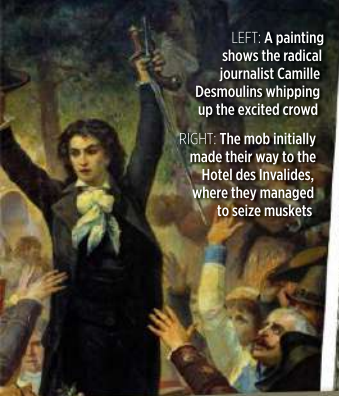


LEFT: A painting shows the radical journalist Camille Desmoulins whipping up the excited crowd

RIGHT: The mob initially made their way to the Hotel des Invalides, where they managed to seize muskets

**"BY 5.30PM, THE BELEAGUERED GOVERNOR HAD ACCEPTED THE INEVITABLE, AND ALLOWED THE ATTACKERS TO SURGE IN"**

## HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

### Originally used to house English prisoners, the Bastille came to be a hated symbol of the ancien régime

The Bastille may have been attacked by a crowd of Parisians on the afternoon of 14 July 1789. But when it was constructed in the late 14th century, it was with a very different brand of marauding assailant in mind: the English.

This fortress, just north of the Seine, was built by King Charles V to protect Paris as an English army menaced northern France at the height of the Hundred Years' War. With the conflict over and the English defeated, the building eventually took on a new – and more sinister – role: as a prison for opponents of the monarchy. It housed an average of 40 enemies of the state, many of them incarcerated there without recourse to trial.

The Bastille's status as a political prison made it an obvious target for the revolutionaries. Yet, ironically, when they stormed the fortress in the summer of 1789, they found just seven prisoners inside: four forgers, a "lunatic", a failed assassin of Louis XV, and a "deviant" aristocrat.

All seven prisoners were freed from the Bastille. But the building itself would not be so lucky. By the end of 1789 it had been destroyed – a visible symbol of the dismantling of royal tyranny.

An elderly prisoner is rescued from the smoke-filled prison fortress

Paris took to the streets. On 12 July, more than 10,000 descended on the Palais Royal just north of the Seine. It was here that the leading revolutionary Camille Desmoulins uttered the famous rallying cry: "Citizens, there is no time to lose... this very night all the Swiss and German battalions will leave the Champ de Mars to massacre us all; one resource is left; to take arms!"

And take arms they did – wherever they could find them. On 14 July, the crowd descended on the Hotel des Invalides, a residence for old and disabled soldiers, where they found around 30,000 muskets. But there was a problem: the muskets had no powder or shot. The commandant at the Invalides had transferred 250 barrels of gunpowder for safe storage to another location in the city: the Bastille.

As a long-time prison for the monarchy's political opponents, the Bastille was always likely to be a target for the revolutionaries; its possession of gunpowder only increased their desire to breach its walls.

But if the crowd of just under a thousand that descended on the building on 14 July believed that de Launay's garrison – which included 82 veteran soldiers and 32 Swiss grenadiers, fortified by 18 eight-pound guns and 12 smaller artillery pieces – was going to hand over the gunpowder without a fight, they were to be disappointed.

At first, the two sides attempted to negotiate an agreement. Yet, sometime in the early afternoon, the crowd lost its patience, surged into the outer courtyard and broke the chains on the drawbridge. Soon gunshots were ringing out from the ranks of the defenders. The fortress had been engulfed in violence.

The Bastille's fate was decided by one group of soldiers that chose to intervene in the fighting, and one that didn't. Just after 3pm, mutinous soldiers arrived to reinforce the attackers, bringing with them cannons. All the while, a large force of royal troops encamped on the Champ de Mars stood aside and left the fortress to its fate.

Abandoned and isolated, de Launay had little room to manoeuvre. At 5pm he ordered the garrison to stop firing and offered to surrender, while threatening to explode the powder stocks if the garrison were not permitted to evacuate unharmed. Yet with no water supply, this was little more than an empty threat. By 5.30pm, the beleaguered governor had accepted the inevitable, and allowed the attackers to surge in.

### UNSTOPPABLE MOMENTUM

While just one defender had died in the storming of the Bastille, 98 attackers had lost their lives – and it wasn't long before de Launay was feeling the fury of the mob's thirst for revenge. It's reported that such was the beating he endured after being dragged out of the building, that he shouted "Enough! Let me die!" and kicked a pastry cook named Dulait in the groin. At this, the crowd fell upon him and stabbed him to death.

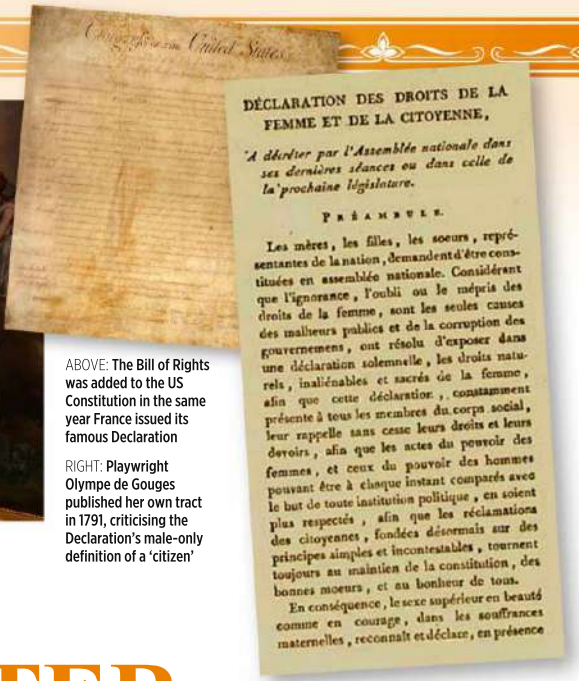
The severed heads of de Launay and Parisian public servant Jacques de Flesselles were paraded through the streets on pikes

The man who began the day as the governor of one of the most feared symbols of monarchical power ended it with his head attached to a pike. One English witness described the spectacle as a "chilling and a horrid sight" – and he wasn't the only observer to be appalled by what had unfolded. When Louis XVI learned of the fall of the Bastille, he asked the Duke of La Rochefoucauld: "Is it a revolt?" "No sire," the duke replied. "It's a revolution."

It was indeed a revolution, and the storming of the Bastille would give that revolution an unstoppable momentum. In the wake of the events of 14 July 1789, French aristocrats would take flight, King Louis would find himself permanently on the back foot and the revolutionaries would believe that anything was possible in their bid to reshape their nation. In 1880, 14 July would become Bastille Day, France's national day. It was due recognition for a bloody few hours that would change the nation forever.

**WORDS: SPENCER MIZEN**

Illustrated versions of the Declaration, painted by Jean-Jacques-François Le Barbier, on display at the Musée Carnavalet, Paris



DÉCLARATION DES DROITS DE LA FEMME ET DE LA CITOYENNE,

*A décréter par l'Assemblée nationale dans ses dernières séances ou dans celle de la prochaine législature.*

PRÉAMBULE.

Les mères, les filles, les sœurs, représentantes de la nation, demandent d'être constituées en assemblée nationale. Considérant que l'ignorance, l'oubli ou le mépris des droits de la femme, sont les seules causes des malheurs publics et de la corruption des gouvernemens, ont résolu d'exposer dans une déclaration solemnelle, les droits naturels, inaliénables et sacrés de la femme, afin que cette déclaration, constamment présente à tous les membres du corps social, leur rappelle sans cesse leurs droits et leurs devoirs, afin que les actes du pouvoir des femmes, et ceux du pouvoir des hommes pouvant être à chaque instant comparés avec le but de toute institution politique, en soient plus respectés, afin que les réclamations des citoyennes, fondées désormais sur des principes simples et incontestables, tournent toujours au maintien de la constitution, des bonnes mœurs, et au bonheur de tous.

En conséquence, le sexe supérieur en beauté comme en courage, dans les souffrances maternelles, reconnaît et déclare, en présence

ABOVE: **The Bill of Rights was added to the US Constitution in the same year France issued its famous Declaration**

RIGHT: **Playwright Olympe de Gouges published her own tract in 1791, criticising the Declaration's male-only definition of a 'citizen'**

# WRITING A NEW CHAPTER

## A pivotal document, issued in 1789, would set out a fresh agenda for France and its people

The year 1789 represented a watershed in the evolution of democratic government. Not only was this the year that the fledgling United States agreed upon 12 amendments to the Constitution – 10 of which would later become the Bill of Rights – but it was also when revolutionary France issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, a pivotal document that went further than the American Declaration of Independence in setting out principles of freedom of belief, freedom of speech, of equality and justice before the law.

That the amended Constitution and the Declaration emerged in the same year was no coincidence. France's revolutionary zeal drew heavily from events over the past decade or so on the other side of the Atlantic. Indeed, one of the Bill of Rights' main advocates – the US minister to France (and future president) Thomas Jefferson – was consulted at length by the Declaration's authors when it was being drafted.

The author of the tone-setting original draft, the Marquis de Lafayette, was strongly influenced by the pervasive and progressive ideas of the Enlightenment. His thinking was predominantly shaped by political philosophers such as John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and their development of the concept of the social contract, the basis of democratically representative government. The Baron de Montesquieu was another significant influence, specifically his thinking around the separation of powers in and around government. Such a structure obviously appealed to a country in the process of erasing the notion of the divine right of kings.

A portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette, author of the Declaration's first draft

The Declaration laid the dynamite for the destruction of the estates system, opening up society and promoting social equality. "All the citizens," it admirably announced, "being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally admissible to all public dignities, places, and employments, according to their capacities and without distinction other than that of their virtues and of their talents."

### STRICT LIMITS

However, it wasn't quite the all-embracing document it may have appeared. While undeniably a monumental step towards universal rights, the Declaration's definition of 'citizens' didn't exactly include everyone. Far from it. A marked distinction remained – a two-tier system of citizenship. Those whose political rights were protected and supported by the Declaration became known as 'active citizens'. These were exclusively men who were French, aged 25 and older, and who had paid taxes equal to three days of work. Out of a population of 29 million, fewer than five million people were able to steer the new republic via the ballot box.

The remainder – 'passive citizens' – were as politically disenfranchised as they had been under the ancien régime; what's more, the document made no reference to women, who were not recognised as active citizens. In 1791, playwright and political pamphleteer Marie Gouze (known as Olympe de Gouges) published the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen, promoting equality between the sexes and pointing out that women could be tried under the law yet couldn't participate in the shaping of that law. "Women have the right to mount the scaffold," she argued. "They must also have the right to mount the speaker's rostrum."

Despite its substantial shortcomings, Lafayette's Declaration did form the foundation stone for the French Constitution and for subsequent advances in civil rights, including the abolition of the slave trade. Its publication certainly ensured that the year 1789 made a hugely significant contribution to the pages of political history.

**WORDS: NIGE TASSELL**

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X2

# LIBERTY, EQUALITY, SORORITY?

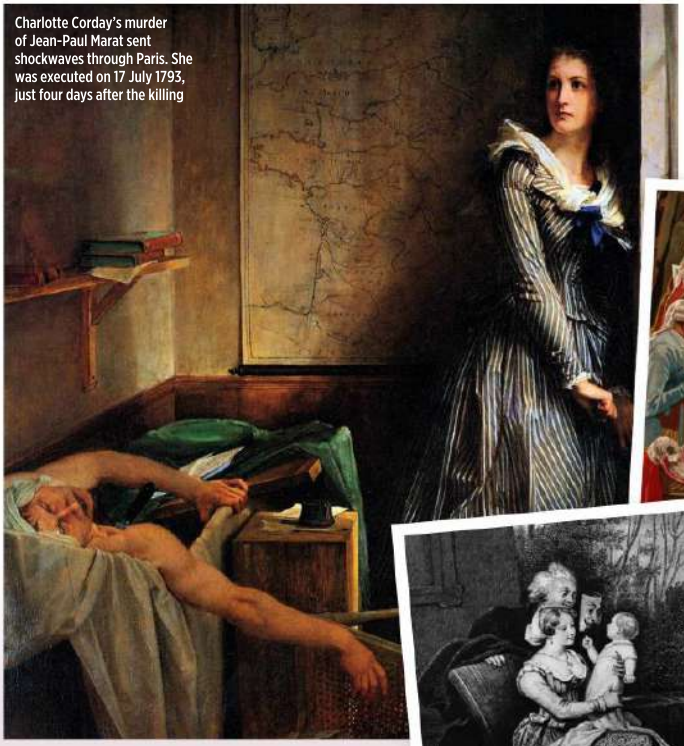
## The French Revolution was a time of great upheaval, but women still had to battle to make themselves heard

"I killed one man to save 100,000," Charlotte Corday allegedly claimed during her trial for the grisly assassination of the revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat. Disillusioned with the radical and violent direction that Marat's radical Montagnard faction was taking, Corday tricked herself into the leader's household on 13 July 1793. She surprised Marat as he worked in his bathtub and plunged a knife into his chest, killing him instantly. Her act of violence – since immortalised in Jacques-Louis David's painting, *The Death of Marat* (*see page 45*) – is one of the most infamous of the period; it sent shockwaves through Paris and changed the perception of women's capabilities. But Corday was by no means the only woman to seize the revolution as an opportunity for action.

### SALONS AND SOCIETIES

Prior to revolution, in the eyes of many Enlightenment thinkers, women's biological differences marked them as second to men in the natural order – they were expected to submit to their fathers and husbands. Some minds of the day, including philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, thought that women should have the right to some education, but that this should be focused on caring and educating children, as women differed from men in their "natural rights".

Yet as revolution swept through France, bringing ideals of equality and fraternity, women found ways to participate in every aspect. There were those who saw a chance to progress women's rights alongside those of French men, like activist and writer Olympe de Gouges – she declared in 1791: "Woman is born free and lives equal to man in her rights." There were women such as Marie-Jeanne Roland and Germaine de Staël – known as *salonnières* – who hosted salons where revolutionary ideas were fostered and political power was brokered. And, of course, there were women who took ▶



Charlotte Corday's murder of Jean-Paul Marat sent shockwaves through Paris. She was executed on 17 July 1793, just four days after the killing

ABOVE: Wealthy writers such as Germaine de Staël (*pictured*) spread revolutionary ideas at their salons

LEFT: An illustration from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's treatise *Emile*, which argued that women should focus on childcare rather than their own education

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X1

# APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

## Anger at rising food shortages drove thousands of women to confront the king in person

Women played a pivotal role in an event often known as the October Days, or the October March, that propelled the first stage of the revolution into a new balance of power.

On the morning of 5 October 1789, many Parisian women were demonstrating over the price of bread in Paris – flour had been scarce and there was a growing feeling that food was being purposely withheld from the poor. There had also been rumours that the previous night, the king had entertained officers with a lavish banquet. Soon, the demonstrators were joined by other women from nearby marketplaces, the growing mob capturing the Hôtel de Ville, and ransacking the city armoury.

Numbers were swelled further by other agitators seeking political reform, and a group of as many as 7,000 people marched 12 miles south to Versailles to put demands to the king. Talks took place overnight, though in the early hours of 6 October some rioters gained access to the palace to search out the queen's apartments.

The insurrection was quelled quickly by the king's troops, but the situation remained tense, and Louis XVI was persuaded by the Marquis de Lafayette to address the rioters who were still surging around the palace.

The violence ceased upon word from the king that he and the royal family would abandon their opulent palace and move to the city; once there, they were under the control of the people. What's more, the October March had demonstrated the power and capability of the common people – the Third Estate – and more importantly, the women of Paris.

GETTY IMAGES X6, ALAMY X2

**"TIME AND AGAIN, CRITICS INSISTED THAT NATURE DETERMINED DIFFERENT BUT COMPLEMENTARY ROLES FOR MEN AND WOMEN"**

ABOVE: **Around 7,000 people, many of them women, marched to Versailles in October 1789, imploring the royal family to return with them to Paris**

LEFT: **Protesters also delivered a petition to the National Assembly the following month, demanding rights for women**

up arms in physical revolt. In October 1789, as flour shortages and hunger in Paris led to discontent that boiled over into anger, women were at the centre of the maelstrom (*see box, above*).

There were also those who petitioned government for more particular rights; in March 1792, Pauline Léon addressed the Legislative Assembly on behalf of Parisian women to suggest that a female militia should be formed to defend their homes, amid increasing counter-revolutionary violence. Though it was ultimately turned down, her petition was signed by more than 300 women. Léon was no stranger to armed struggle; she had marched on the Bastille in July 1789, carrying her own pike. But as with other women, Léon's participation was not confined to rioting and demonstrating; in 1793 she, together with actress Claire Lacombe, founded the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women, a short-lived organisation that pushed for women's right to contribute to the revolution.

It was by no means the only such society; social clubs and revolutionary salons were important outlets, albeit

Women's associations emerged during the revolution, advocating gender equality

ABOVE: Male 'allies' such as Marie-Jean Caritat backed the efforts of revolutionary women

MAIN: Jacques-Louis David's 1793 depiction of Murat's murder is arguably the most famous

ones with differing aims. For example, though Marie-Jeanne Roland is rightly remembered as an influential woman of the revolution, she was *not* an advocate for political rights for women, who she felt were still most effective in their domestic roles, and she loathed radical behaviour by the *sans-culottes* (the mostly working-class people of Paris).

There were also those we might today call 'male allies', such as intellectual and aristocrat Marie-Jean Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet. In July 1790 he published a newspaper article that argued that France's millions of women should enjoy equal political rights with men. The article caused a sensation, addressing the widely held feeling that women did not possess the same capacity as men for rationality or a sense of justice. Condorcet challenged critics to "show me a natural difference between men and women on which the exclusion could legitimately be based". In turn, Condorcet's article inspired the Cercle Social, one of the most progressive social clubs in revolutionary Paris, which launched a campaign for women's rights in 1790–91.

## HAMPERED AMBITIONS

But the state of revolution that allowed women this sense of social progress was not to last. Despite their presence at the centre of many factions and salons, the prevalent view was still that women could best serve the cause by acting as 'republican mothers' – teaching their sons to honour and love the republic, and supporting the new society that was being carved out. Time and again, critics insisted that nature determined different but complementary roles for men and women. These divisions and divergent aims – both between individuals and classes of women, and mirrored in the movement at large – hampered any chances of real progress.

In May 1793, women were banished from government proceedings and shortly afterwards, they were forbidden from forming any political assembly. Corday's assassination of Marat in July became a rallying point for the revolutionary government, and in October 1793, all women's clubs were outlawed.

The question of whether the French Revolution furthered women's rights remains a contentious point among historians today. Some social rights *were* granted to women; new inheritance laws, for example, meant that, irrespective of gender, children could inherit parents' wealth equally. There was another step forward for the legal status of unmarried mothers and their children, while a new law enabling divorce gave equal terms for men and women.

But as Napoleon rose to power, ideals of republican motherhood persevered. Though the revolution was undoubtedly a time of great debate concerning the status and rights of women from all social classes, the revolution did not change much in terms of their ability to contribute to a French democracy. And though the revolution had long ripples, it cannot be seen as a direct contributor to women's suffrage in France – a right that they would not receive until 1945.

**WORDS: ELINOR EVANS**

# FEMALE VOICES OF THE REVOLUTION

Three women who ended up paying the ultimate price for their political activities

## OLYMPE DE GOUGES

The writer and activist was born Marie Gouze, a self-educated butcher's daughter from the south of France. She was largely responsible for the introduction of women's rights to the revolutionary cause. Addressing her 1791 pamphlet *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen* to Marie Antoinette, Gouze became a rallying voice for women's citizenship. Her writing, along with her association with the Girondins, was also her death sentence; she was denounced as "unnatural" and guillotined during the Terror, in 1793.

## MARIE-JEANNE ROLAND

Madame Roland was a writer and hostess of a key bourgeois Paris salon in which revolutionary ideals first brewed. She gained influence in the government when her husband, Jean-Marie Roland, became minister of the interior under Louis XVI in 1792 – she helped to draft many government speeches, including a letter by her husband that criticised the king, and the Rolands went on to wield power and influence at the centre of the Girondin faction. Marie-Jeanne was arrested in May 1793 in place of her husband – who had fled in fear of his own arrest – and was executed by guillotine in November that year. Her last words: "Oh Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!"

## CHARLOTTE CORDAY

A minor aristocrat, Corday was involved in the revolution from its early days, attending political meetings and becoming inspired by the ideas of the Girondin faction. She felt that the Montagnard faction was too radical and she wanted to save the revolution by eliminating Montagnard leader Jean-Paul Marat. Her assassination of Marat as he bathed is an infamous turning point in how women were viewed during the revolution. Corday was guillotined for the murder in 1793, and remains a symbol of women's actions during the tumult that swept across France.

# *Forging a new* IDENTITY

Symbolism played a major role in the French Revolution as the imagery of the ancien régime was swept away

## ▲ TRICOLORE FLAG

Inspired by the cockades (*see opposite page*) worn by revolutionaries, the *tricolore* became the national flag of France in 1790. Red and blue were the colours of Paris, while white represented the monarchy (which hadn't yet been abolished). Originally ordered red, white, blue, the colours were reversed in 1794 to create the flag we still see today.

## ◀ FASCES

The *fasces* – a bundle of rods with an axe at the centre – was an ancient Roman symbol of power and authority. It was adopted by the revolutionaries to show that the French people were united behind a single cause: liberty. Variations of the *fasces* used a Phrygian cap (*see below left*) in place of a blade.

## ▶ PHRYGIAN CAP

This brimless red hat, often worn by revolutionaries, was inspired by that worn by the people of ancient Phrygia (in present-day Turkey), as well as the *pileus*, a cap given to Roman slaves once they had gained their freedom.

## ▲ REPUBLICAN CALENDAR

In October 1793, France's National Convention adopted a new calendar comprising 12 months, each named after a natural element – Fructidor ('month of fruits'), for example, ran from 18 August until 16 September. Days of the week were named for a seed, flower, tree, tool, animal or fruit. The revolutionary calendar was abolished by Napoleon in 1806.

## ▶ LIBERTY TREES

Inspired by a similar concept that developed in the US during the Revolutionary War, liberty trees – often elm – were adopted by the French Revolutionary government in 1792 as symbols of the Republic, and planted all over France.

GETTY IMAGES X6, ALAMY X4

## ▼ CLOTHING

The working-class *sans-culottes* movement was an important political group in the revolution. The term, literally meaning 'without breeches', was a reference to the fact that members typically wore trousers or pantaloons, as opposed to the knee-breeches sported by noble and bourgeois men. Some *sans-culottes* were poor and had little choice when it came to clothing, but many members deliberately shunned the clothing of the aristocracy, believing that all people were equal and should not be segregated by fashion, and so that they could be identified as working men, as opposed to 'gentlemen', or men who did not labour with their hands.

## ◀ ANTHEM

Written in just one night by army officer Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle – to rally troops to defend France in the war against Austria in 1792 – 'La Marseillaise' was adopted as the official anthem of the French Republic three years later. Originally entitled 'War Song for the Army of the Rhine', the anthem gained its more famous name due to its popularity among volunteer soldiers from Marseille.

## ▶ COCKADES

*Tricolore* cockades were knots of red, white and blue ribbon worn to show support for the revolution. A blue and red cockade (the ancient colours of Paris) was presented to Louis XVI after the storming of the Bastille in 1789, with the royal white said to have been added by the Marquis de Lafayette to show loyalty to the crown. In 1792, when the *tricolore* cockade became the official symbol of the revolution, the three colours were said to represent the three estates of French society: the clergy (blue), the nobility (white) and ordinary French people (red).

**DEADLY PRECISION**
The steel blade of the guillotine weighed more than 40kg – once deployed, it would reach the victim's neck in less than a second

**COVERING UP**
The guillotine's oak frame was often painted red to disguise the blood that coated it

## ◀ GUILLOTINE

Ask most people what image springs to mind when they think of the French Revolution, and they will probably say the guillotine. Named after its creator, Dr Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, the guillotine dispatched prisoners quickly, efficiently and humanely – or at least that's what its adherents believed. In total, 2,639 people are known to have been executed by guillotine in Paris during the course of the revolution, along with thousands of other people across France.

WORDS: EMMA SLATTERY WILLIAMS

**AWAITING FATE**
The unfortunate victim would place their head into the wooden stock. Once severed by the blade, it would fall into the basket below – much to the delight of spectators

A portrait of Marie Antoinette by Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, painted in 1783. The queen's stint in prison was a world away from the opulence she was accustomed to

# *The Final Days of* MARIE ANTOINETTE

When the French queen was indicted in August 1793, she asked that she would not "suffer long". However, she went on to spend more than two months living in squalor before her eventual execution. **Will Bashor** tells the story of Marie Antoinette's demise

## 2 AUGUST 1793

Marie Antoinette arrived at the Conciergerie in the Temple Prison, Paris, at 3am, after being torn from the arms of her daughter, Marie-Thérèse, and her sister-in-law, Madame Élisabeth. Her husband, King Louis XVI, had been executed earlier in the year and her youngest son, Louis Charles, had been taken from her a month earlier.

Marie Antoinette was quickly escorted to a cell below the level of the prison courtyard. The brick-tiled floor was covered with muddy slime and water trickled down the walls due to the proximity to the Seine. When the river was low, it was possible to see shreds of the old wallpaper – decorated, ironically, with the fleur-de-lis.

The queen stared at the bare walls. When she found a nail, she hung her watch on it and then stretched out on her bed – a folding cot that was thought (by some) too good for the queen. "The most infected dungeon with a few trusses of straw for a bed," remarked a guard, "is all that is necessary".

### EXPENSES SPARED

However, the current prison wardens, Toussaint and Marie Anne Richard, were known to be compassionate and showed their prisoners respect and consideration. They took great risks to provide Marie Antoinette with small comforts: a pillow; a small table with two straw chairs; a small wooden box of powder and a tin pot of pomade.

The queen and her wardens were under constant surveillance. Only a screen separated the queen from two guards who could be found drinking, smoking, and playing cards at any time of the day.

When the queen implored Madame Richard for a fresh supply of clothing, the orders from the revolutionary government were so stern and strict that the apprehensive warden did not dare grant her wishes. However, when Richard noticed that Marie Antoinette's bonnet was no longer capable of being mended, she took the risk to ask for a new one. Curiously, the government officials complied and the queen received two new bonnets. It is known that they cost seven livres each – the queen's expenses were meticulously recorded during her incarceration.

The officials must have taken notice of the cost of the new bonnets because, on 26 September, they ordered police to search through the queen's belongings left in the Temple prison to find any clothing that she might need and to send it along. The decree dryly added: "It is expected that this will result in savings."

Worried about the melancholy queen, one day Madame Richard brought her youngest child, Fanfan, with her to the queen's cell. He was a charming lad with fair hair and blue eyes but, when the queen saw him, she reportedly trembled with emotion and, taking him into her arms, covered him with kisses. She then burst into tears and spoke of her own son who was about the same age, but still imprisoned in the Temple prison. She said she thought of him constantly day and night. This incident reportedly made the queen so distressed that she had to lie down. Madame Richard confided to Rosalie, the prison maid, that she ▶

**"THE WARDENS TOOK GREAT RISKS TO PROVIDE MARIE ANTOINETTE WITH SMALL COMFORTS"**

ABOVE LEFT: **Marie Antoinette's husband, King Louis XVI, had been executed by guillotine in the Place de la Révolution on 21 January 1793**

ABOVE RIGHT: **The queen's youngest son, Louis Charles, is torn from her arms in July 1793. Her daughter, Marie-Thérèse, was taken away in August**

RIGHT: **Louis Charles sits alone in a squalid cell. The heir to the French throne would succumb to illness in 1795, aged 10**

**Some guards believed the queen's bleak cell at the Conciergerie was too good for her**

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2

would take care never to bring her son into the prison again.

However, Madame Richard would not have the opportunity, as the Richards' wardenship would soon be cut short. On 28 August 1793, the royalist Chevalier of Rougeville dropped a carnation in the queen's cell, which contained a message rolled up in its petals.

Marie Antoinette later testified that the message revealed the following vague phrases: "What will you do? What do you plan to do? I've been in prison, but I was saved by a miracle. I will come Friday." There was also an offer of money, perhaps to bribe the guards, and a promise that Rougeville would return on Friday. The queen used a pin to prick a note that said: "I am kept in sight. I cannot talk to anyone. I trust you. I will come."

This was the first incident of what was known as the Carnation Affair, a plan to help the queen escape, and it could very well have succeeded. Rougeville did return on Friday to escort the queen to safety, but a guard who had been bribed stopped the queen at the last minute from leaving the premises, for reasons unknown. The plot had failed and the queen was transported back to her cell.

All parties in the affair were questioned by the authorities, but the queen was evasive, careful not to incriminate anyone. The Richards, however, were relieved of their duties and imprisoned for their negligence. They were not released until after the queen's execution, after which Madame Richard returned to work and was often praised by the prisoners for her kindness. Three years later, however, she was murdered by a desperate convict who was reportedly 'maddened' by a sentence of 20 years in irons. When Madame Richard handed him a bowl of soup, he stabbed her in the heart with a knife. She died within minutes.

## 21 SEPTEMBER 1793

Following the Carnation Affair, the Richards were replaced by the warden of La Force prison, Monsieur Bault, and his wife. The warden of the Conciergerie was not a coveted post and the Baults hesitated before contemplating the responsibility, aware that Richard and his wife had just been arrested.

On the other hand, the Baults were indebted to Marie Antoinette, who had patronised them when she was queen. And when the couple discovered that the brutish caretaker of the Temple prison was being considered for the wardenship at the Conciergerie, the couple quickly solicited and obtained the position. They looked forward to using the opportunity to console and soften the captivity of their former mistress, as they had done for the royal prisoners of La Force.

But times had changed. Since the departure of the Richards, wardens could no longer shop for food provisions for the queen; suppliers had to pass through the prison checkpoints with their goods. Although Madame Bault's orders were to give her prisoner only bread and water, she followed the example of her predecessors and carefully prepared food bought secretly from nearby vendors. And because Marie Antoinette never drank wine and the fetid water of the Seine River did not agree with her, Madame Bault also took great risk to have the pure waters of Arcueil brought to her every day.

Monsieur Bault was more cautious. On one occasion, the queen reportedly offered the prison maid Rosalie a piece of white ribbon. After Rosalie left the queen's cell, Warden Bault reportedly joined her in the corridor and snatched the ribbon directly from her hands. Did he fear for Rosalie's life, or perhaps his own, for receiving such a small gift from the queen?

"I am very sorry to have vexed that

INSET: **The royalist Alexandre Gonsse de Rougeville plotted to free the queen from prison – but his plans were quickly rumbled**

ABOVE LEFT: **As a result of the incident, Marie Antoinette was sent to a new cell where the only form of privacy was a modest screen**

**A painting depicts Marie Antoinette being taken to her execution on 16 October 1793. Separated from her children and still grieving for her husband, the queen endured months of emotional turmoil before her death**

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X4

Marie Antoinette was executed in front of jeering crowds on 16 October 1793, clad in a simple white dress with her hair shorn short

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**A GRAVE MATTER**

Following her execution, Marie Antoinette's body was tossed in an unmarked grave in Paris' Madeleine cemetery. However, in 1815 – during the restoration of the monarchy – the remains were reburied in the Basilica of St Denis, where they still lay today.

poor lady, but my post is so difficult that a mere nothing is enough to make one tremble," he said, according to a later account. "I can never forget that poor Richard and his wife are at the bottom of a dungeon. In God's name, Rosalie, do not commit such acts of imprudence, or I should be a lost man."

## THE COST OF COMPASSION

Marie Antoinette's feelings may have been hurt by Bault's reaction, but she surely recognised the danger that came from being her warden. The former warden's family currently sat in prison and could soon be escorted to the scaffold for their compassion. Yet on another occasion, Warden Bault had risked his life, worrying about the queen's comfort in a cell without any stove for heat. When the queen asked for a cotton blanket to be placed on her bed, Bault asked the prosecutor Fouquier-Tinville if he could procure one. "You dare ask?" the prosecutor reportedly snapped. "You deserve the guillotine!"

## 16 OCTOBER 1793

The Baults' wardenship did not last long. Marie Antoinette's lengthy trial began with a 15-hour session on 14 October and a 24-hour session over 15-16 October.

"I was a queen, and you took away my crown; a wife, and you killed my husband; a mother, and you deprived me of my children. My blood alone remains: take it, but do not make me suffer long." She is reported to have said after the prosecutor read his indictment. After 10 weeks in the Conciergerie, the queen's incarceration was coming to an end. The verdict of the jury was affirmative. It was 4.30am when she heard her sentence: death by guillotine. She didn't utter a single word.

After guards returned Marie Antoinette to her cell, she asked Warden Bault for a pen and paper. He complied and she wrote a letter to Elisabeth, her late husband's sister:

"I write to you, my sister, for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death – that only awaits criminals – but to go and rejoin your brother. Innocent as he, I hope to show the same firmness as he did in his last moments. I grieve bitterly at leaving my poor children; you know that I existed but for them and you – you who have by your friendship sacrificed all to be with us."

When the queen finished the letter, she reportedly kissed each page repeatedly, folded it without sealing it, and handed it over to Warden Bault. The gendarme standing guard outside the cell likely observed this because, when Bault left the queen, the guard confiscated the letter and it was taken to Fouquier-Tinville. Elisabeth would never receive the queen's last testament.

At 11am the next morning, on 16 October 1793, the executioner Sanson appeared. Madame Bault confirmed that Sanson cut the queen's hair and that the queen, looking back, saw the executioner place the locks of hair in his pocket. "This I saw," said Madame Bault, "and I wish I had never seen that sight."

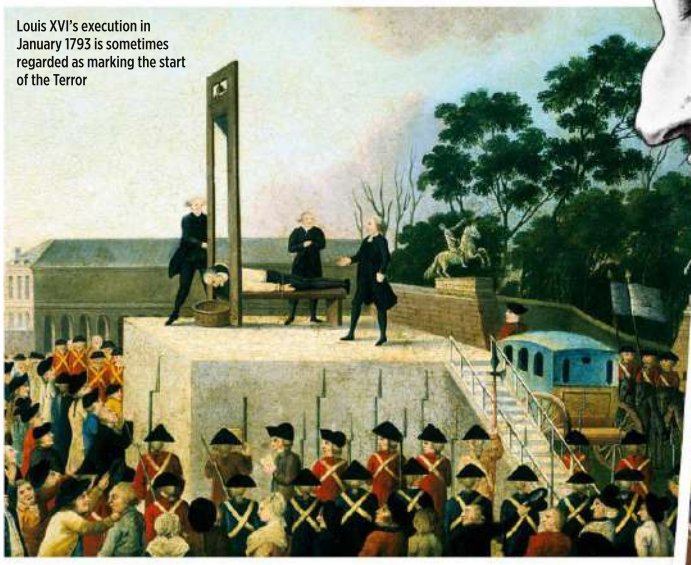
At 12.30pm, Marie Antoinette was seated in an open cart and driven to the guillotine at the Place de la Revolution. After the queen's head fell it was shown to the crowd, who cried: "Vive la République!"

Marie Antoinette's funerary monument in the Basilica of St Denis, Paris, where she is buried alongside her husband

**WILL BASHOR** is the author of *Marie Antoinette's Head: Prisoner No. 280 in the Conciergerie* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2016)

# ARCHITECT OF TERROR

Maximilien Robespierre may have been one of France's leaders during the revolution, but even he wasn't safe from the guillotine's blade



Louis XVI's execution in January 1793 is sometimes regarded as marking the start of the Terror

ABOVE RIGHT: **Members of the Girondin faction were rounded up and executed, despite having once dominated revolutionary politics**

TOP RIGHT: **The head of Louis XVI, as depicted in a pamphlet published by the famously radical Montagnards**

The French Revolution saw external and internal warfare on a massive scale – from war on France's borders as the other major powers of western Europe attacked French territory, to what became a bloody civil war in the Vendée in western France, a region that witnessed the great majority of deaths during the revolution (*see page 32*). Set against this backdrop of brutality was the Terror, a particularly violent period when executions, legally sanctioned by the National Convention – desperate to stamp out even the faintest hint of opposition to the revolution – became commonplace; official executions numbered around 17,000, but many more thousands were killed.

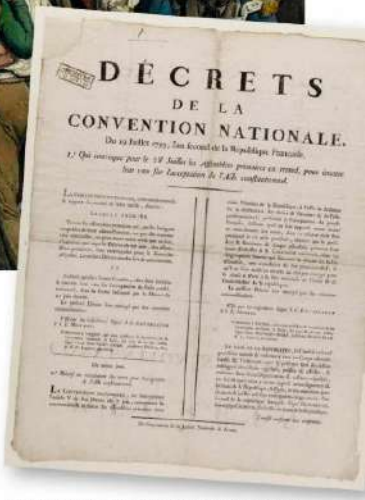
There is disagreement among historians as to when the Terror actually started – whether it began with Louis XVI's execution in January 1793 or during the political upheaval of the subsequent months – but its seeds were certainly sown by the September Massacres of 1792. Occurring around two weeks before the First Republic was instituted, over the course of four days and nights between 1,100 and 1,600 prisoners in nine of Paris's 13 jails were killed – half of the capital's prison population. The vast majority of the victims weren't necessarily anti-revolutionary figures sympathetic to the monarchy; many were apolitical common criminals, as well as women and children incarcerated for various reasons. Also among the victims were 200 Swiss soldiers who were executed out of fear that they would be freed should Paris be attacked by royalist and/or foreign armies, who the Swiss would subsequently join to attempt to quash the revolution.

## FACTIONAL BATTLES

The September Massacres prompted a wave of accusations, denials and

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X3

A painting shows the Girondins being greeted by a crowd of angry *sans-culottes* during the pivotal insurrection of 31 May–2 June 1793




LEFT: **A lawyer by profession, Robespierre emerged as a key figure in the post-monarchy power struggle**

RIGHT: **A decree issued by France's National Convention in July 1793**

counter-accusations among the revolutionaries, widening the fissure between the increasingly radical Jacobins and the more moderate Girondins. Maximilien Robespierre was the foremost Jacobin, an agitator whose words and deeds had provided plenty of fuel to the overthrowing of the monarchy the previous month. Robespierre denied the allegation that the September Massacres were part of a Jacobin conspiracy to grab power but, while acknowledging their illegality, he also stressed the inevitability of such violence in a heated political climate intent of fundamental societal change. "Citizens," he asked, "did you want a revolution without revolution?"

But as shocking as the September Massacres were, Robespierre would come to be indelibly associated with violence and death on a much wider scale. One of the members of the Estates-General – that later became the National Assembly – Robespierre was a lawyer who was elected as the deputy for Paris in the National Convention three years later. He would be pivotal in the post-monarchy power struggle, which took a major turn in the spring and summer of 1793 when the dominant Girondin deputies in the Convention were purged in the Insurrection of 31 May–2 June. Their removal from power followed huge demonstrations before the Convention by *sans-culottes*, whose angry protests were enough to intimidate the national legislature into voting for the Girondins' arrest. Rather than ushering in a new political order and a closely defined constitution, France had descended into a bloody tangle of division and disorder.

The newly formed Committee of Public Safety aimed to bring order to French society, albeit ultimately by the deployment of vicious and brutal tactics. In December 1793, the National Convention formally invested executive powers into the committee, but by then it had already been operating in an increasingly dictatorial fashion. Robespierre was undeniably the committee's kingpin and a man who had helped to strengthen the Revolutionary Tribunal, a court specifically convened to put the revolution's political opponents on trial. The Tribunal would become a crucial tool of the Terror that was further implemented over the subsequent months, atrocities for which Robespierre would be forever associated.

**"FRANCE HAD DESCENDED INTO A TANGLE OF DIVISION AND DISORDER"**

The Terror was unleashed against a backdrop of deep fear, one that bordered on paranoia for the more radical revolutionaries. Not only was there fear that foreign powers would succeed in wresting control of France and overthrowing the Republic, but there was also great suspicion that spies and counter-revolutionaries were set on undermining the French economy in an attempt to provoke a working-class uprising against the First Republic.

## CHOPPING AND CHANGING

It was deemed that the most efficient way of relieving this paranoid pressure would be to simply eradicate those viewed as enemies of the state. In September 1793, the Law of Suspects was passed, clearing the path for the brutality to follow. The legislation set out the reasons why any citizen could be instantly detained. All manner of treasonous behaviour could be cited – even something as relatively trivial as hoarding grain. Simply speaking ill of the government could result in a very grave scenario.

The Revolutionary Tribunal dispensed swift punishment, sending many ▶

# BIG NUMBERS

Vital statistics from one of the bloodiest episodes in French history...

**7**

The number of weeks that the so-called Great Terror lasted – the most intense and brutal period of the Terror

**50%**

The percentage of the prison population of Paris killed in the September Massacres of 1792

**17,000**

The official number of executions carried out during the Terror

**86**

No fewer than 86 deputies of the National Convention met violent deaths during the Convention's duration: most by guillotine, but a few by their own hand to pre-empt execution

**36**

Maximilien Robespierre's age when he was executed at the Place de la Révolution in Paris in 1794

**c300,000**

The number of people detained under the Law of Suspects, which ordered the arrest of anyone suspected of opposing the revolution

GETTY IMAGES X10

Jacobin politician Georges Danton is led to the guillotine in April 1794, having been convicted of trying to overthrow the government

## "THE ACCUSED WOULD EITHER BE FOUND NOT GUILTY AND FREED, OR FOUND GUILTY AND SENTENCED TO DEATH"

public figures to the guillotine – the so-called 'national razor'. These included Louis XVI's queen Marie Antoinette; his lawyer Guillaume Malesherbes; the first post-revolution mayor of Paris Jean-Sylvain Bailly; and several of Robespierre's political opponents within the revolution, such as Georges Danton, the one-time de facto leader of the National Convention. These were the more high-profile executions.

Most were inconspicuous killings, the victims being members of the Third Estate. Some estimates put the purge's death toll as high as 50,000.

Robespierre tried to offer a justification for the violence: "Terror is nothing more than speedy, severe and inflexible justice," he reasoned, "a consequence of the general principle of democracy, applied to the most pressing needs." Short-term pain, apparently, could be meted out for long-term gain. Bertrand Barère, a colleague of his on the Committee of Public Safety, was more colourful in his explanation. "Terror is the order of the day. This is how to do away instantly with both loyalists and moderates, and the restless counter-revolutionary scum."

As the Terror gathered an unstoppable momentum, its main driver wasn't Robespierre but rather his comrade Georges Couthon, another lawyer and also a prominent Montagnard in the National Convention. In June 1794, as the Terror gathered an unstoppable momentum, it was Couthon who introduced the Law of 22 Prairial. This legislation later became known as the Law of the Great Terror, and was designed, in part, to bring the Terror under tighter control, and to deal – one way or another – with prison overcrowding, a consequence of the Law of Suspects. The new law meant that the accused would either be found not guilty and freed, or found guilty and sentenced to death. No other punishment was now available to the Tribunal. But no one was immune from its reach; there was real fear among the deputies of the Convention that the Law of 22 Prairial, that they had voted for, could now be used against themselves.

### "A RIDICULOUS DICTATOR"

The Terror's death toll rose substantially in Paris as a result – although declined elsewhere in the country – and executions were increasingly being held en masse. In the words of 20th-century historian Donald M Sutherland, "this notorious law created a murder machine".

As the Terror intensified, Robespierre became increasingly convinced – not

ABOVE: Robespierre mounts the scaffold at the Place de la Révolution, where many of his closest confidantes also met the same fate

TOP: An artistic interpretation of Robespierre's dramatic arrest the previous day, after his attempt to address the National Convention

unreasonably – that he would soon become the victim of an assassination. At the National Convention, he accused a long-term ally, Joseph Fouché, of launching a conspiracy against him, but retracted his comments when he realised he was in a minority. He then announced that he wouldn't set foot in the chamber again if he were to be opposed. In the choppy wake caused by the Terror, the tide was turning against Robespierre; his political capital was on the wane. He was denounced as a "ridiculous dictator" by another former ally, Lazare Carnot, who – along with his fellow deputy, Pierre-Joseph Cambon – called for the Terror to be brought to an end. "Down with the tyrant!" rang the calls in the Convention. "Arrest him!"

Knowing that they would have to dispose of Robespierre or risk being disposed of by him, the Convention overturned his rule and he was arrested. Under a law passed in March 1793, Robespierre and his partisans were denied the right to defend themselves; they were instead declared 'outlawed' for resisting judgement (a trial) and subject to the death penalty without trial.

The following day Robespierre and 21 of his closest political confidantes were executed by guillotine at the Place de la Révolution. Robespierre's death was as swift and ruthless as those of the many thousands whose lives ended under the brutality that he had supported.

**WORDS: NIGE TASSELL**

## THE THERMIDORIAN REACTION

### Robespierre's gruesome demise paved the way for a new, more conservative regime to seize power

**The 15-month period between Robespierre's execution in July 1794 and the establishment of a new government, the French Directory, in November 1795 was known as the Thermidorian Reaction – named after Thermidor, the month of the French Republican Calendar when Robespierre was removed from power. Outwardly, the Thermidorian Reaction signalled a distinct moderation of what had gone immediately before it, whether this was a move towards less radical policies, the removal of executive powers from the Committee of Public Safety, or the declared end of the bloody Terror.**

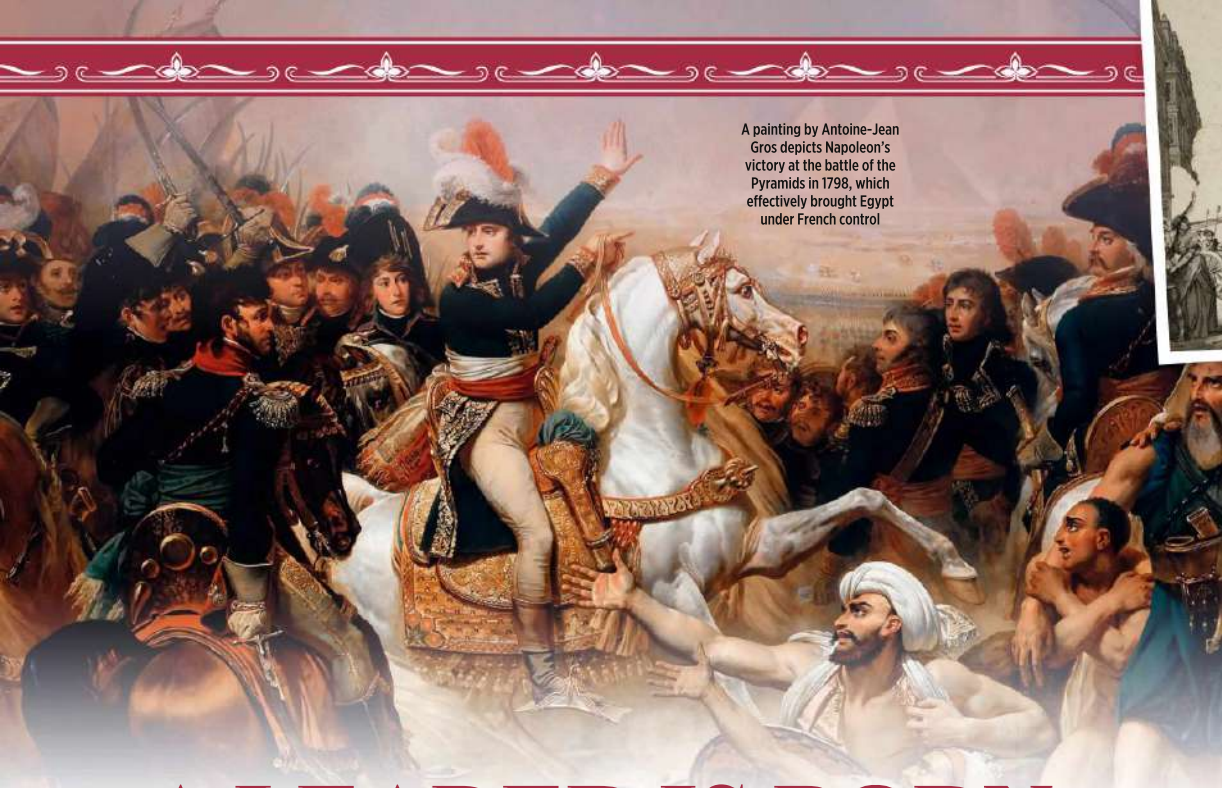
This is not to say that the Thermidorian Reaction was a time of peace and stability, of reconciliation and rebuilding. Far from it. The obstinate Robespierre might have been permanently removed, but many of his supporters and allies remained in clear sight and were subjected to treatment similar to that meted out during the Terror. Those on the left of France's political spectrum were placed on trial with due process and if found guilty (an almost inevitable outcome) were either imprisoned or executed in their hundreds.

This wave of recrimination became known as the White Terror, with massacres also ordered, and largely performed by a group known as the Muscadins. Despite their name meaning 'wearer of musk perfume', and despite their predilection for the dandiest clothing of the period, the Muscadins were a group of brutal, unforgiving street fighters.

Alongside the subjugation of the left, the policies of the Thermidorian Reaction shifted France's political landscape towards the centre ground. During the Terror, a policy of dechristianisation had attempted to rein in the power of the Roman Catholic Church, with thousands of clerics either forced into exile or executed, but the Thermidorian Reaction moved back towards religious tolerance, with freedom of worship restored. This liberalism extended – in the capital, at least – to conspicuous royalist support no longer being punished. Economic policy was loosened as well – chiefly the scrapping of the Law of the General Maximum, a control on prices and wages. However, this ended up causing rampant inflation, adding to the regime's growing unpopularity.

In August 1795, a new constitution was drawn up, one that diluted the purer democracy the revolution had favoured. Two months later, a royalist revolt against the National Convention was defeated by troops commanded by a young Napoleon Bonaparte, but within three weeks the Convention was dissolved. Its replacement was the French Directory, a five-man committee set up to govern the nation.

The arrest and execution of Robespierre and his supporters didn't mean that violence ended overnight



A painting by Antoine-Jean Gros depicts Napoleon's victory at the battle of the Pyramids in 1798, which effectively brought Egypt under French control

# A LEADER IS BORN

Napoleon Bonaparte shone in his early military career, but what allowed him to rise to the top, says **Professor Marisa Linton**, was his exploitation of the instability that followed the revolution

The French Revolution had brought down the centuries-old regime of absolute monarchy and privileged nobility. In its place, the revolutionaries founded a new regime based on principles of individual liberty, equal rights, and popular sovereignty. Yet they had not been able to secure this new political structure for a new France and the ensuing 10 years would be defined by instability, bloodshed and war.

Exploiting that chaos, the gifted army officer Napoleon Bonaparte was able to seize power in a militarist regime that was, in some ways, more autocratic than that of Louis XVI, and in terms of the millions of casualties of the Napoleonic Wars, much more lethal.

Many young men profited from the revolution smashing the stranglehold of hereditary privilege and venality, hitherto endemic in all parts of ancien régime society, forging careers in the higher ranks of the army. Napoleon was one of them. Although his family were minor nobility, they were Corsican – France had conquered Corsica in 1769 – and of Italian origin, making them the kind of people who, before the revolution, were looked down upon as foreigners and outsiders. By July 1792, Napoleon had been promoted to captain in the regular army.

It was the disastrous decision of the revolutionary leaders to go to war against the European powers opposed to their cause that set in motion a chain of events that would lead to the French government becoming ever more dependent on the armies and their generals. Tensions were further inflamed by the émigrés, or French opponents of the revolution, mostly aristocrats, who had fled abroad and agitated for the foreign powers to invade France and restore the monarchy and the old regime.

Girondin leader Jacques-Pierre Brissot, believed France should embark on "a crusade for universal liberty"

The move to war was spearheaded by Jacques-Pierre Brissot, leader of a revolutionary faction known as the 'Girondins', who declared that France must wage "a crusade for universal liberty" and export the ideals of the revolution abroad. Brissot assumed that the people of western Europe would welcome French soldiers bringing 'liberty', but he was opposed by a very different revolutionary, Maximilien Robespierre. He argued that the revolution could not and should not be spread by invading armies at the point of bayonets, giving the prescient warning: "No one welcomes armed liberators". Brissot's strategy, said Robespierre, would put France and the revolution at the mercy of the military elite, whose loyalty was far from certain.

But Brissot's belligerent rhetoric caught the popular mood and Robespierre's opposition to war was

GETTY IMAGES X5

ABOVE: Royalist forces clash with Napoleon's men in Paris during the failed Vendémiaire uprising of October 1795

RIGHT: Napoleon is declared president of the short-lived Italian Republic in 1802 – six years after he first conquered northern Italy

denounced as 'unpatriotic'. In April 1792, France declared war on Austria, launching a conflict that would last – with two short-lived breaks in 1802 and 1814 – for a generation, ending only with the final overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo in June 1815. Contrary to the warmongers' optimistic expectations, the initial war went badly for France. For a time, Paris was in danger of falling to invading armies. The resultant crisis polarised tensions and, in August 1792, brought about a second revolution that overthrew the constitutional monarchy and installed a republic.

War intensified and by the spring of 1793, France was confronted by enemies on all sides, with Britain joining the conflict after the execution of the French king in January 1793. It was against the backdrop of war that the revolutionaries formed a government led by the radical group, the Jacobins, who resorted to the use of terror, including the new invention, the guillotine.

In the crisis of 1793–94, Robespierre, once an opponent of the death penalty, became, like many other revolutionaries, an advocate of terror. Yet he remained deeply uneasy at the militarisation of the revolution. He warned that military expansion put unprecedented power into the hands of the generals, pointing at historical figures, such as Julius Caesar and Oliver Cromwell, who had used their ascendancy over their armies to seize personal power and topple republican or revolutionary regimes. Already two French generals, Lafayette and Dumouriez, had tried to lead their armies against the government. Fearful of further betrayals, revolutionary leaders used terror to control and eliminate any generals whose ambitions, loyalty and competence had come under suspicion. They took no chances. During 1793 to 1794, many generals were arrested and several executed.

In June 1794, the French armies won a major victory at the battle of Fleurus against a coalition army led by the Habsburg field marshal Prince Josias of Coburg, which ended the danger of invasion and thus the need for terror. This paved the way for the fall of Robespierre and the Jacobins. Robespierre was retrospectively stigmatised as being the mastermind behind a regime of terror in which, in reality, many revolutionaries had been deeply involved.

**"NAPOLEON RETURNED TO PARIS FULL OF A NEW, STILL MORE AMBITIOUS PLAN, TO MOUNT AN INVASION OF EGYPT"**

The revolutionary wars then changed track from defensive to expansionist. Military success became about exploiting the resources of other countries, and shoring up the survival of the new political regime, the Directory.

## BONAPARTE'S BIG BREAK

Napoleon, always deeply ambitious, was alive to the new opportunities on offer. He abandoned his brief flirtation with Jacobinism, during which he had been imprisoned for a time after the fall of Robespierre, and a chance to rescue his military career soon arrived in October 1795 when he was entrusted with the suppression of the Vendémiaire uprising, a royalist revolt in Paris.

Napoleon encounters plague victims in Jaffa. Even though his campaign in the Middle East was a failure, the general painted it as a victory

But his big break came in 1796 when he was nominated by Paul Barras, one of the Directors, to lead the French army in an invasion of northern Italy. His troops won some spectacular victories against the Austrians, and he established the new Cisalpine Republic, with equality under the law. To France, he sent back looted art treasures and plenty of cash: 15 million francs worth in 1796 and a further 35 million the following spring.

Napoleon returned to Paris full of a new, still more ambitious plan, to mount an invasion of Egypt. It would be France's first foray into establishing itself as a colonial power in North Africa, and he hoped to use Egypt as a route to India to challenge British colonial power there.

"The time is not far when we will think that in order to truly destroy England, we have to take Egypt," Napoleon wrote to the leaders of the Directory. His strategy was supported by the foreign minister, Talleyrand, a former bishop and blue-blooded noble who had turned revolutionary before taking fright at the Jacobins. Now a key player, Talleyrand was a political survivor and cunning strategist. Napoleon would make full use of Talleyrand's diplomatic skills, even while badmouthing him to others. Bonaparte also had secret personal

During his 1798 invasion of Egypt, Napoleon sought to frame himself as a bringer of liberty, helping to free the nation's people from their Ottoman oppressors

**"THE COUP THAT BROUGHT NAPOLEON TO POWER WAS A LESSON IN HOW TO DESTROY AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT"**

motives for fixing on Egypt, stemming from his belief in his own 'great man' destiny. He was consciously walking in the footsteps of Alexander the Great, hoping to replicate the Macedon king's conquest of Egypt.

The French armies arrived in Egypt in July 1798 and Napoleon presented himself as the bringer of liberty, declaring that his aim was to help the Egyptians throw off their Mamluk oppressors while respecting their religious beliefs and cultural customs. In a proclamation to the Egyptians, he stated: "I am come to restore your rights, punish your usurpers, and raise the true worship of Mohammed... I venerate, more than do the Mamluks, God, His prophet, and the Koran." He also presented his invasion of Egypt as a force for scientific progress and European Enlightenment, bringing scientists and artists alongside the armies.

## ONE CRISIS TO ANOTHER

Yet after victory at the battle of the Pyramids near Cairo, events soon took a dire turn for the French. In early August, they were heavily defeated in Aboukir Bay by the British naval fleet under the command of Horatio Nelson, in what became known as the battle of the Nile. British ships then blockaded the French, trapping them in a hostile environment among an increasingly hostile population. Napoleon's soldiers were ill-equipped for a campaign in the heat of the desert: lack of water, lack of food, and spreading sickness decimated their ranks.

Not willing to give up, Napoleon ordered an extension of the invasion into the western edges of what is now the Middle East. His soldiers took the city of Jaffa, massacring thousands of its civilian inhabitants, before many of the French in their turn fell victim to the plague.

Seeing the scale of the debacle and hearing that a renewed political crisis in France was offering the opportunity he had been seeking, Napoleon slipped away in secret, abandoning the soldiers and evading the British blockade. He arrived back in October 1799, before news could spread of the extent of his military disasters. Ever the astute propagandist, and never more so than at this moment, he presented himself as a victor, with large crowds turning out to welcome him as France's potential saviour.

Meanwhile, the Directory lurched from one crisis to another, its leaders determined to avoid any return to the political radicalism and violence of the early 1790s, and becoming more reliant on the military to stave off the threat posed by royalists on the right and Jacobins on the left. Corruption was rife, with individuals making vast sums of money from the political and social crisis, particularly out of lucrative contracts to supply the armies.

A group of leaders, including Talleyrand and the Director Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, another former revolutionary, determined to initiate a coup to bring down the Directory and install a strong military leader in its place. Another Director, Barras, was notoriously corrupt and it was a simple, if expensive, matter to buy his silence and acquiescence. Even so, it was nearly not Napoleon who was the beneficiary of the last crisis of the Republic. Sieyès personally disliked Napoleon and turned to him only when his first choice for a military leader, general Barthélemy-Catherine Joubert, died fighting in Italy.

## SEIZING POWER

The coup of 18 Brumaire – the date according to the revolutionary calendar, 9 November 1799 – that brought Napoleon to power became an object lesson in how to destroy an elected government. With the executive power of the Directory nullified, it remained only to bring down the legislative parliamentary body. Napoleon's brother, Lucien, succeeded in getting himself elected as president of the Council of Five Hundred, the main parliamentary body, thus giving himself a deciding voice. A lie was concocted that the Jacobins were planning a conspiracy to attack the deputies. The Council of Five Hundred was moved out of Paris to Saint-Cloud, supposedly for its own safety, but in fact making the deputies more vulnerable to a military takeover.

The plan was that Napoleon would enter the debating chamber to address

Horatio Nelson's 1800 victory over the French fleet at Aboukir Bay left Napoleon's troops trapped in the hostile Egyptian desert

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X1, BBC STUDIOS

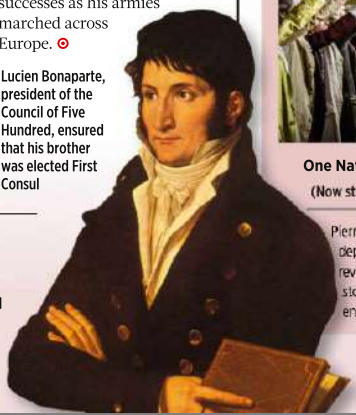
Napoleon seizes power during the coup of 18 Brumaire (9 November 1799), which saw the Directory replaced with the new French Consulate

the deputies directly, and explain the rationale leading him to assume power. When he later recalled his part in the coup, he presented himself as the master of events and heroic saviour, rising above party faction to bring order and security out of chaos. The reality was far different: Napoleon was no public speaker, and when met with furious opposition shouting, "Down with the dictator!" he stammered and was barely coherent. Eventually he fainted and fled the chamber.

It was Lucien who saved the day for the Bonapartes by going outside to the soldiers guarding the Council and telling them that his brother was being threatened by assassins. He assured the troops that his brother's sole desire was to defend sacred liberty and produced a sword which, in a theatrical gesture, he held to his brother's breast, vowing to kill him should he prove to be a liar. The ploy worked. Soldiers entered the chamber and used fixed bayonets to disperse the deputies, who fled for their lives through the windows out into the park of Saint-Cloud.

Napoleon made many promises and assurances – that he would protect and maintain the Republic; that he would defend the principles of the revolution; that he would stay in power just so long as it took to resolve the political crisis and ensure the security of the state. He kept none of them.

One of Napoleon's greatest tactical assets as a leader would be his ability to cement his popularity through the application of plausible lies skilfully delivered to a public ready to believe him. For those who remained unconvinced, he would be equally ready to employ coercion and ruthless repression. Napoleon's regime was not a naked military dictatorship. He was careful to maintain the appearance, at least, of a consultative regime, with elected assemblies and plebiscites. Real power would rest firmly in Napoleon's hands, but he knew that his popularity and his acceptance by the French people would depend on the continuance of his military successes as his armies marched across Europe.



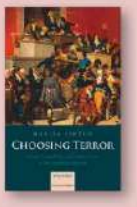
Lucien Bonaparte, president of the Council of Five Hundred, ensured that his brother was elected First Consul

**MARISA LINTON** is professor emerita of history at Kingston University. Her forthcoming book, *Terror: The French Revolution and its Demons*, co-written with Michel Biard, will be published by Polity Press in December 2021

# GET HOOKED

If we've whetted your appetite for the French Revolution, why not explore the topic further with our pick of books, films and podcasts

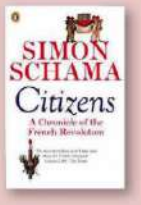
## BOOKS




**Choosing Terror: Virtue, Friendship and Authenticity in the French Revolution**

By Prof Marisa Linton (OUP, 2013)

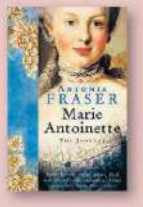
Marisa Linton explores revolutionary politics in 18th-century France through the eyes of Maximilien Robespierre and his fellow Jacobins, and against a backdrop of traumatic wars and betrayals.




**Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution (paperback)**

By Simon Schama (Penguin, 2004)

First published in 1989 – the bicentennial of the fall of the Bastille – Simon Schama's much acclaimed book follows the causes and course of the French Revolution from the 1770s to the fall of Robespierre, drawing on art history, women's studies, cultural history and more.




**Marie Antoinette: The Journey**

By Antonia Fraser (Nan A Talese, 2001)

Antonia Fraser examines the life of the much-maligned French queen – from her influence over King Louis XVI and rumours of extramarital affairs, to her patronage of the arts, and her trial, imprisonment and eventual execution by guillotine in October 1793.

## LISTEN

BBC RADIO 4

▶ **The Invention of France: Maximilien Robespierre** *(BBC Radio 4)*: Misha Glenny and historians – including Marisa Linton – explore the French Revolution and the Terror through the life of Maximilien Robespierre: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06knkfs*

History Extra

▶ **For podcasts, features, quizzes, interviews and more on the French Revolution, visit our website: *historyextra.com/french-revolution***

## WATCH

**One Nation, One King (2018)**

(Now streaming on Amazon Prime)

Pierre Schoeller's period drama depicts the early years of the revolution, beginning with the storming of the Bastille and ending with the king's execution.

**Royal History's Biggest Fibs with Lucy Worsley (series 2, episode 1)**

(BBC Two, available on iPlayer)

Lucy Worsley explores some of the myths and fibs swirling around the revolution of 1789, including the truth behind one of the most famous phrases in history: "Let them eat cake!"

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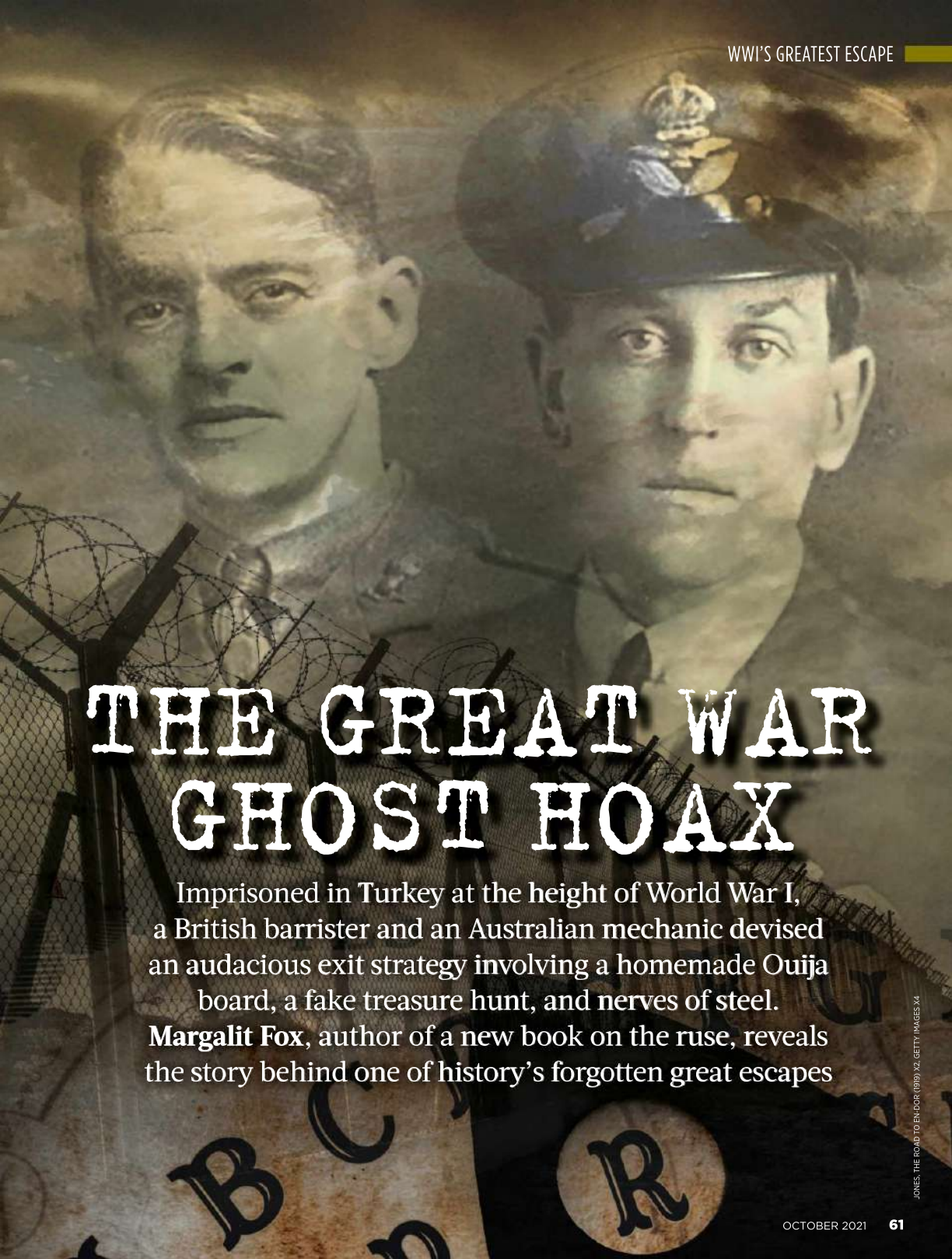


# THE GREAT WAR GHOST HOAX

Imprisoned in Turkey at the height of World War I, a British barrister and an Australian mechanic devised an audacious exit strategy involving a homemade Ouija board, a fake treasure hunt, and nerves of steel. **Margalit Fox**, author of a new book on the ruse, reveals the story behind one of history's forgotten great escapes

JONES, THE ROAD TO EN-DOR (1919) X2, GETTY IMAGES X4

A British officer's sketch of the prisoner of war camp at Yozgad, Turkey, where Elias Henry Jones and Cedric Waters Hill found themselves incarcerated in 1916

Elias Henry Jones (*left*) and Cedric Waters Hill (*right*) pictured in c1915. Despite hailing from different social backgrounds and opposite sides of the globe, the pair became firm friends

JOHNSTON AND YEARSLEY, FOUR-FIFTY MILES TO FREEDOM (1919) X1, JONES, THE ROAD TO EN-DOR (1919) X3, JONATHAN CORUM X1, GETTY X2

It was the most remarkable prison break in history: in 1918, as World War I raged on seemingly without end, two young British officers escaped from a remote Turkish prison camp… by means of a Ouija board.

Yet that scheme – a meticulously conceived, rigorously engineered confidence game, worked for more than a year on their Ottoman captors – was precisely the method by which our real-life heroes, Elias Henry Jones and Cedric Waters Hill, broke out of Yozgad, an isolated prisoner of war camp high in the mountains of Anatolia.

Their plot seemed born of a fever dream. Using a handmade Ouija board, Jones and Hill would ensnare their captors in an elaborate piece of participatory theatre entailing candlelit séances, magical illusions and a hunt for buried gold, with clues seemingly planted by ghosts. If all went according to plan, Yozgad's commandant, an iron-fisted Ottoman army officer, would gleefully conduct Jones and Hill along their escape route, and the Ottoman government would pay their travel expenses. If their con was discovered, it would mean a bullet in the back for each of them.

Jones and Hill's hoax – one of the only known examples of a con game being used for good instead of ill – also required them to feign mental illness, stage a double suicide attempt that came perilously close to turning real, and endure six months in a Constantinople asylum, an ordeal that drove them to the edge of actual madness. Yet in the end they won their freedom.

The astounding story was first outlined Jones' memoir, *The Road to En-dor*. Published in 1919, it was intended as a cautionary tale about how breathtakingly easy it is to become a spiritualist charlatan, a species of war profiteer that flourished between 1914 and 1918 to wring dividends from bereaved families. Jones' title was a deliberate nod to 'En-Dor', a bitter poem by Rudyard Kipling (himself the father of a fallen soldier) in which he decried such mountebanks: "The road to En-dor is easy to tread / For Mother or yearning Wife. / There, it is sure, we shall meet our Dead / As they were even in life…" (The title 'En-Dor' invokes the biblical Witch of Endor, from the First Book of Samuel, whom Saul asks to conjure Samuel's spirit.) But how in the world was such a preposterous strategy – escape via Ouija board – actually able to succeed?

Jones was the scheme's chief architect, and his memoir dwells minutely on *how* the ruse worked, detailing a web of planning, rehearsal and performance. There is less analysis, however, of *why* – the precise ingredients of the psychological cocktail that let him, as

he wrote, transform his captors into "clay in the potter's hands." Hill's memoir, *The Spook and the Commandant*, published posthumously in 1975, likewise favours exposition over explanation.

## AN UNLIKELY DUO

The two protagonists could not have been more different. Jones, in his mid-30s, was a Welsh-born artilleryman, the Oxford-educated son of a lord. (His father, Sir Henry Jones, was one of the world's most eminent moral philosophers.) Trained as a barrister, Jones was married to his childhood sweetheart and serving as a magistrate in British Burma. He and his wife were the parents of a baby daughter, with another child on the way, when he enlisted with the Indian Army Reserve of Officers in the spring of 1915.

Hill, an Australian-born flier, was a bachelor in his late 20s who had been a mechanic on a Queensland sheep station. When war was declared, he longed to join up as a trainee pilot, but Australia did not have a fully functioning military air corps: the airplane was barely a decade old. Sailing to England, he enlisted in the Royal Flying Corps, the precursor to the RAF.

For both men, the road to Yozgad was replete with hardship: for Hill, a forced landing and six-hour shootout with Ottoman forces in Egypt; for Jones, a desperate five-month siege at Kut-al-Amara, in present-day Iraq, followed by a forced march through 2,000 miles of brutal country during which scores of men would die. What they also had in common was keen intelligence, vibrant imaginations, and the willingness to risk their lives for the chance of freedom.

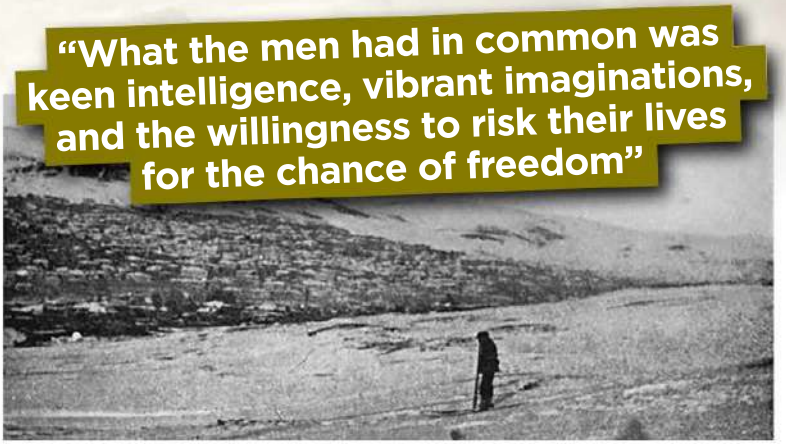
The trouble was that freedom from Yozgad was considered unattainable. Part of a constellation of World War I prison camps spread over Turkey, it was among the most remote, lying 150 miles south of the Black Sea and 300 miles north of the Mediterranean. More than 4,000 feet above sea level, the camp had been earmarked for incorrigibles: those British officers deemed most likely to escape. The nearest railway station, Angora (present-day Ankara), was five days' journey by cart through forbidding terrain: jagged mountains surrounding the camp and the Anatolian desert beyond. Yozgad was the Alcatraz of its day.

But for the hundred British officers interned there, something else precluded escape even more forcibly: on the orders of the commandant, Kiazim Bey, an escape attempt by any one of them would bring severe reprisals – including lockdown, isolation and even execution – on all those who remained. Men of honour, the prisoners swore to one another that they would not flee. But some, including Jones and Hill, dreamed of liberty. The question was how to attain it without compromising the safety of their countrymen.

Their plot began as a lark. Remanded to Yozgad in the summer of 1916, Jones and Hill spent their time much as their fellow prisoners did: trying to stave off the despair and boredom that are hallmarks of life in captivity. The inmates had already tried chess, poker and roulette, with a wheel made from a discarded door, but such distractions had paled over time.

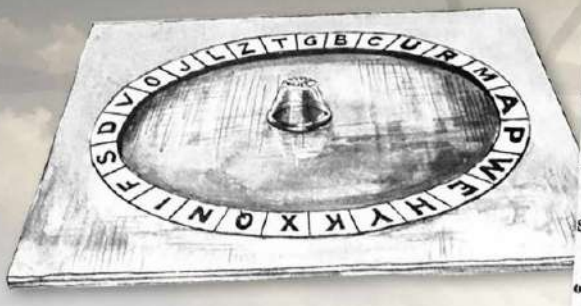
Then, in February 1917, Jones got a postcard from an aunt in Britain. Knowing that her nephew needed to fill his long, empty days, she suggested he try experimenting with a Ouija board. The war had renewed the spiritualist ardour that had suffused the Victorian age, rallying adherents in Britain, the US and on the Continent round spiritualism's central tenet: that through the agency of a spirit medium, it was possible for the living to communicate with the dead.

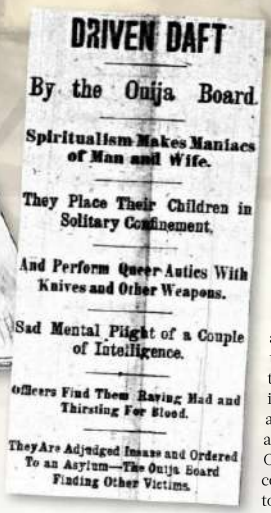
"What the men had in common was keen intelligence, vibrant imaginations, and the willingness to risk their lives for the chance of freedom"



In planning their escape from Yozgad, the men had to work out how they would conquer the mountainous terrain around the camp

Yozgad was among Turkey's most remote PoW camps, making it ideally suited for holding those most likely to make a bid for freedom



DRIVEN DAFT

By the Ouija Board.

Spiritualism Makes Maniacs of Man and Wife.

They Place Their Children in Solitary Confinement.

And Perform Queer Antics With Knives and Other Weapons.

Sad Mental Plight of a Couple of Intelligence.

Officers Find Them Raving Mad and Thirsting For Blood.

They Are Adjudged Insane and Ordered To an Asylum—The Ouija Board Finding Other Victims.

ABOVE LEFT: **An illustration of the rudimentary Ouija board that Jones and Hill fashioned out of scrap material found around the camp**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Newspapers of the period reported that practising spiritualism could cause insanity – a belief the men used to their advantage**

◀ Wielding a handmade Ouija board – built, like all of the Yozgad prisoners' furnishings, from salvage – Jones began faking séances for his fellow captives. His bona fides as a "spirit medium" were aided greatly by his stellar visual memory, which let him internalise the positions of the letters that were arrayed randomly round the handmade board. As a result, he was able to work the board blindfolded, subtly guiding the inverted water tumbler that served as an ersatz planchette. This prowess persuaded many of his fellow captives that Jones was truly receiving messages from the dead.

Though few of the officers had been spiritualist believers at the start, they came to cherish the nights at the "spook-board," which spelled out "communications" from a panoply of shades: the flirtatious Sally, the gentle Dorothy, the cantankerous American Silas P Warner, and a commanding presence known only as the "Spook".

"There was no place to which we could not go, nothing we could not see with the Spook's eyes, or hear with his ears," Jones wrote in 1919. "A successful night at the spook-board was the nearest we could get, outside our dreams, to a breath of freedom."

## THE CON IS ON

It was all no more than a practical joke – a way to pass captivity's stagnant time. But one day in the autumn of 1917, a young Yozgad official sidled up to Jones. "Can the Spirit find a buried treasure?" he whispered. (It had long been rumoured in Yozgad that a wealthy local Armenian, anticipating the mass killings of hundreds of thousands of Armenians by Ottoman Turks in 1915–16, had buried his numerous riches somewhere nearby – and that camp officials had been digging for them in vain.)

And so the con began. Over the coming months, working under constant surveillance and with limited resources, Jones and Hill would need to perfect a Ouija-guided hunt for non-existent treasure, with clues "planted" by non-existent ghosts. "If I could do to the Turks what I had succeeded in doing to my fellow-prisoners," Jones would write, "if I could make them believers, there was no saying what influence I might not be able to exert over them. It might even open the door to freedom."

And so it would, by virtue of impeccable planning, immense personal risk, and no small amount of luck. At the Ouija board, Jones gradually convinced his captors that a vast hoard of gold, buried somewhere in Turkey, would be theirs – if only they would lead the two "mediums" far from Yozgad in search of it. Hill's prowess as a sleight-of-hand artist let him further dupe their jailers with "spirit manifestations" that would have been the envy of the most talented Victorian medium.

As they reeled Yozgad's officials ever more deeply into the con, Jones and Hill deftly exploited not only their all-too-human avarice but also their deep need – widely prevalent in wartime – to believe in a larger, all-knowing, benevolent force... a force very much like the Spook. Over time, the ruse also required the conmen to bury a set of cryptic clues to the treasure's whereabouts in the countryside around Yozgad, and to bewitch their captors into digging for them. They would then use a secret camera to photograph their captors in the act, thereby securing tangible evidence of their complicity – an insurance policy designed to guarantee their comrades' safety.

All went according to plan until, on the eve of their escape, Jones and Hill were betrayed. Their plot lay in ruins. They were forced to adopt a terrifying Plan B: to have themselves committed to a mental hospital on the chance that if they could convince psychiatrists they were insane, they might be repatriated to Britain in an official exchange of sick prisoners. And so began the caper's dark last act: *Stalag 17* meets *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

Rigorously coached by a British army doctor interned with them at Yozgad,

**"The Ouija board spelled out 'communications' from a panoply of different shades, including a presence known only as the 'Spook'"**

ABOVE: **A rare photograph shows camp officials searching for the first 'clue' on Jones and Hill's fake treasure hunt** LEFT: **Another image depicts the general area in which the clue had been hidden; Hill stashed it in a place he knew he could find once the snow had melted**

JONES, THE ROAD TO EN-DOR (1919) X5, SANDES, IN KUT AND CAPTIVITY (1919) X2, NORTHERN TERRITORY LIBRARY X1, GETTY X2

FLIER CEDRIC HILL WORKED
LAST-MINUTE DISASTER ENDED HEROIC FEAT
Sleepless Flights Through the Night Skies of Asia
MIRACLES BEFORE
NEW GOLD FIND WOULD SAVE AUSTRALIA
Fenton Now Behind "S.W."
OFFER A REWARD OF £50,000

1: **Upper House at Yozgad, where Elias Henry Jones held the first séances**
2: **Camp commandant Kiazim Bey (*centre*) was sucked in by the duo's scam**
3: **Visiting Yozgad's dedicated 'exercise lane' gave prisoners a slight relief from the monotony of camp life**
4: **The doctors at Haidar Pasha Hospital, whom the men had to con to in order to earn their freedom**
5: **A natural risk-taker, Cedric Waters Hill later attempted to break the world record for the fastest solo flight from England to Australia – a feat covered in newspapers**
6: **Hill pictured after his failed 1930 world record attempt**

Jones and Hill managed to simulate mental illness so convincingly that their captors received official permission to transport them to Haidar Pasha Hospital in Constantinople for observation. To shore up their credentials as madmen, they very publicly attempted to hang themselves ("within limits") en route.

Confined at Haidar Pasha for six months, Jones and Hill were under constant suspicion of malingering and were subjected by doctors to series of traps and tests. They faced a chronic, looming terror: if they inhabited their mad roles as fully as they needed to, they might slip irretrievably into real madness. In the end, they vowed to make themselves "mad enough" to fool the experts, whatever the cost. And thus they succeeded at last in persuading their doctors to certify them.

Dispatched homeward on the British hospital ship *Kanowna* in October 1918, they reached England around the time of the Armistice of Mudros, concluded on 30 October and ending the war between the Allies and the Ottoman empire. But while their ruse bought them little time, it may well have saved their lives. Had they remained at Yozgad, they might easily have been among the dozen inmates who died there amid the influenza pandemic of 1918. What was more, in a world devoid of hope, their two-pronged hoax – embracing their careers as sham spiritualists and as counterfeit madmen – gave them a reason to persevere as perhaps nothing else could.

## FRAUDS AND FRIENDS

Overall, Jones and Hill's con game succeeded because it took place at a pivotal moment in western history – an era awash with magicians, mentalists and mountebanks; when wide belief in the spirit world stood shoulder to shoulder with hurtling developments in science; and when miracles of disembodied communication like telegraphy, radio, and the telephone made the possibility of discourse with the dead an authentic empirical question.

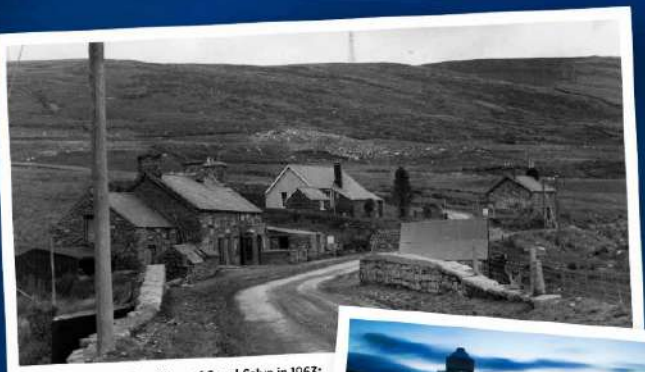
But while our heroes' escapade reveals much about life during the early 20th century, it also illuminates the 21st. The psychological techniques that underpinned their con game remain widely used today by advertisers, salespeople and political firebrands. As it was for Jones and Hill, mastery of the art now known as "coercive persuasion" is indispensable to each.

Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the whole affair, however, is the story of friendship that developed between two men who almost certainly would not otherwise have met. "For a brief period," Jones would write, recalling their confinement in Haidar Pasha, "Hill was put in the bed next mine. It seems a little thing, that we should lie there three feet apart instead of 10, but it meant much... We did not attempt to talk – we were too closely watched for that – but at night, under cover of darkness, sometimes he and sometimes I would stretch out an arm, and for a brief moment grip the other's hand. The firm strong pressure of my comrade's fingers used to put everything right."

**MARGALIT FOX** is a former senior writer at *The New York Times*. Her new book, *The Confidence Men: How Two Prisoners of War Engineered the Most Remarkable Escape in History*, has recently been published in the UK by Profile Books

# TOP 10 UNDERWATER CITIES

Lying beneath the surface of the world's seas and lakes are the real Atlantises, preserved by the waters and submerged due to natural disasters – or the march of progress



ABOVE: The village of Capel Celyn in 1963; two years later, the houses were underwater
RIGHT: The Llyn Celyn reservoir today

## CAPEL CELYN 1

Wales

In 1965, the Tryweryn Valley in north Wales was chosen as the location for the new Llyn Celyn reservoir, which would supply fresh water to Liverpool and the Wirral. In the valley, however, was the small village of Capel Celyn, which would have to be evacuated first. Plans to evict the 67 residents of the Welsh-speaking village and flood the land with 70 billion litres of water were vehemently opposed by the local community, Welsh MPs and the political party Plaid Cymru. A paramilitary nationalist organisation, Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru, formed and carried out a number of bombings at the site. Despite protests and campaigning efforts, the scheme went ahead and the village's post office, chapel, cemetery, school and homes slipped beneath the water, seemingly gone forever. But in 1989, during a long drought, water levels dropped low enough for parts of the submerged Capel Celyn to be seen for the first time in more than 20 years.

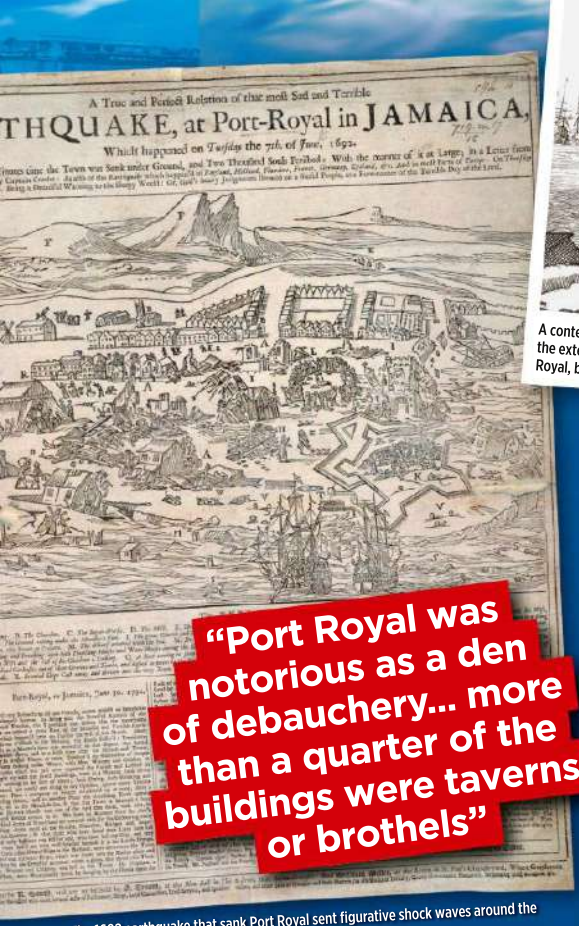
## VILLA EPECUÉN 2

Argentina

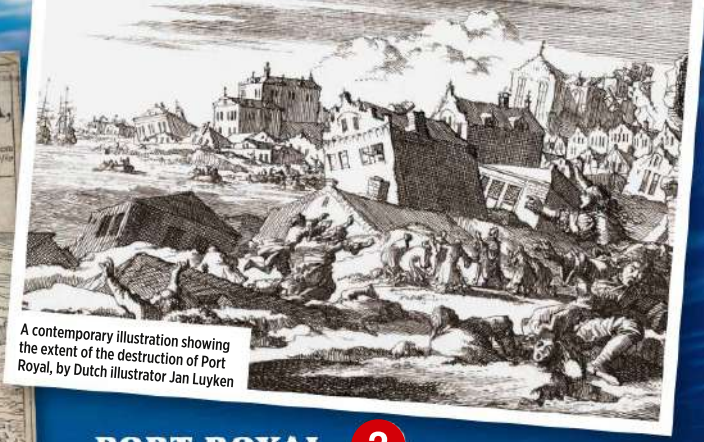
Once an exclusive holiday hotspot, this small Argentinian town some 370 miles southwest of Buenos Aires welcomed thousands of visitors every year. They were there to experience the reputed health and therapeutic benefits of the salty waters of Lago Epecuén. While local businesses boomed from the 1920s until the 1970s, sufficient funds did not go towards the maintenance of the dam that divided the lake from the town, and in November 1985 a long period of wet weather caused it to breach, slowly causing a flood. Thousands of residents were evacuated while homes and businesses had to be abandoned as the water reached depths of 10 metres. Before long, Villa Epecuén was completely cut off. By 2011, the water had mostly receded to its original level, but many streets are still submerged and the town was never rebuilt. Visitors now head to Villa Epecuén for a different reason: to see the ghost town with buildings stained with the pale residue of the salt from the water.

Villa Epecuén in 2011 after water levels had receded

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X5


A True and Perfect Relation of that most Sad and Terrible
THQUAKE, at Port-Royal in JAMAICA,
Which happened on Tuesday the 7th of June, 1692.

The 1692 earthquake that sank Port Royal sent figurative shock waves around the world, being reported in London newspapers



A contemporary illustration showing the extent of the destruction of Port Royal, by Dutch illustrator Jan Luyken

## PORT ROYAL 3

Jamaica

At the time, some might have seen the destruction of Port Royal in 1692 as divine intervention; a punishment for what was known as 'the wickedest city on Earth'. The thriving Jamaican port had become a haven for pirates during the 17th century, where gold earned from attacking Spanish ships could be spent and goods – anything from sugar to slaves – could be sold.

Jamaica had been captured by the English in an invasion in 1655, but a lack of manpower forced the governors of the island to turn to privateers. Soon, Port Royal was notorious as a den of debauchery and wealth. More than a quarter of the town's buildings were taverns or brothels, and the likes of famed Welsh privateer Captain Henry Morgan used it as his base. Then, on 7 June 1692, the heyday of Port Royal came to an end in a shocking natural disaster.

In 1692, a huge earthquake struck the island, killing more than half of Port Royal's population. Much of the town had been built on sand, which liquefied once the earthquake hit, and most of its buildings sank into the harbour. What hadn't already been destroyed was then consumed by a barrage of waves from the accompanying tsunami.

Although a village was later rebuilt, many of Port Royal's original buildings are still underwater – in Davy Jones' locker.

**"Port Royal was notorious as a den of debauchery... more than a quarter of the buildings were taverns or brothels"**

## HERACLEION 4

Egypt

Just northeast of Alexandria is an ancient Egyptian city frozen in time. Heracleion had been a significant town in Greek mythology, with one story claiming that Paris and Helen of Troy had visited before the Trojan War. The city's most common name, Heracleion – it is also known by its Egyptian name, Thonis – is believed to have come from the legendary Greek hero Heracles, who is said to have arrived in Egypt at that spot and had a temple built there in his honour.

Heracleion's importance began to wane in the 2nd century BC as Alexandria overtook it as Egypt's main port. Rising sea levels, tsunamis and soil liquefaction – when the strength of the soil is compromised due to earthquakes – saw much of the city's buildings disappear beneath the Mediterranean Sea until the 8th century AD when Heracleion was almost completely submerged. In 1999, after a five-year search, the underwater ruins were rediscovered by French archaeologist Franck Goddio. Among the finds, which are still being made, are a temple, statues, coins and a *baris*, an ancient Nile river boat. ▶

ABOVE: A statue of a sphinx found among the treasures of Heracleion

RIGHT: The hieroglyphics on this two-metre high black stele were perfectly preserved, recording the payment of taxes at the port city

LEFT: Baiae is home to the largest number of underwater Roman mosaics in the world

BELOW: A scuba diver approaches a statue of the Greek god Dionysus

## BAIAE 5

Italy

Baiae was the hedonistic party town of the ancient Roman world. Sitting on the northwest shore of the Gulf of Naples, it was a playground for emperors and Rome's rich and powerful. Julius Caesar and Nero had villas there and Emperor Hadrian spent his final moments in his Baiaen palace. It was a place of luxury with pools and bath houses, and those wanting something extra special built villas on pylons over the sea.

Today, this spa town sits at the bottom of the Mediterranean. Baiae's thermal springs were a big part of its attraction, for their healing powers, but these came with problems. The town was on the Phlegraen Fields, a large active volcanic area. Over time the phenomenon of bradyseism – where volcanic activity makes the earth gradually rise and fall – caused the city to sink into the sea. The *nymphaeum*, a grand monument dedicated to nymphs – built by Emperor Claudius – and its marble statues is one of the sites still visible underwater. In 2002, the sunken city became a Marine Protected Area.

**"Baiae was the hedonistic party town of the ancient Roman world"**

The 75-metre belfry of the former Monastery of St Nicholas rises above the human-made lake

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

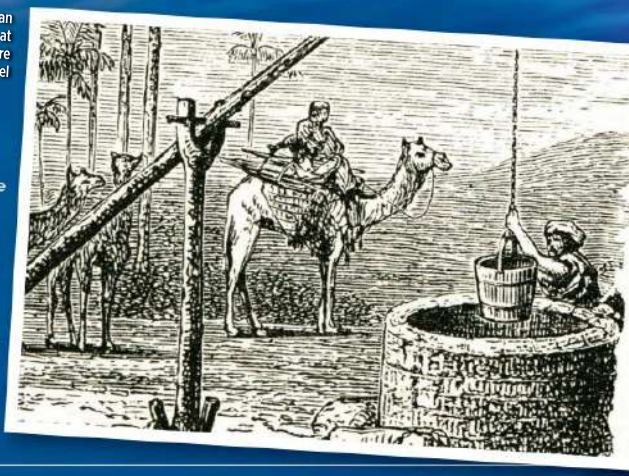
## KALYAZIN 6

Russia

If you visit the northwestern Russian town of Kalyazin today, all you will see of the original settlement is a bell tower standing out of the water. In the late 1930s, under the orders of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin with the aim of modernising the country, the town was flooded to make way for the Uglich Reservoir. A dam on the Upper Volga River was built, which flooded an area of around 96 square miles, including Kalyazin. Dating back to the 12th century, the town boasted many medieval buildings, all of which were submerged or dismantled. The so-called 'flooded belfry' of the Monastery of St Nicholas is all that can be seen above the water, and it has become a popular site for swimmers and visitors who can take a boat to see the belfry up close. Orthodox services are even still held occasionally to this day.

## ATLIT YAM 7

Israel



An illustration showing an ancient well similar to those at Atlit Yam, which now lies more than 10 metres below sea level

In the waters of the Mediterranean Sea, off the coast of Israel, are the submerged remains of a settlement that go back between 8,000 and 9,000 years. The Neolithic site of Atlit Yam covers 10 acres and since its discovery in the 1980s has revealed evidence of a community that combined agriculture, pastoral and marine means of subsistence. As well as houses and wells, at the heart of Atlit Yam is a stone semicircle constructed of seven megaliths.

In 2008, the preserved skeletons of a woman and a child were excavated – several burials have been found at Atlit Yam – which have revealed the earliest-known cases of tuberculosis. And ear injuries caused by cold water spotted on other skeletons have led archaeologists to suggest that men in this community would have dived for food. A tsunami hitting the coast is believed to have been the cause of Atlit Yam being suddenly abandoned, a theory supported by the discovery of a stockpile of fish remains around the site.

## DVĀRAKĀ 8

India

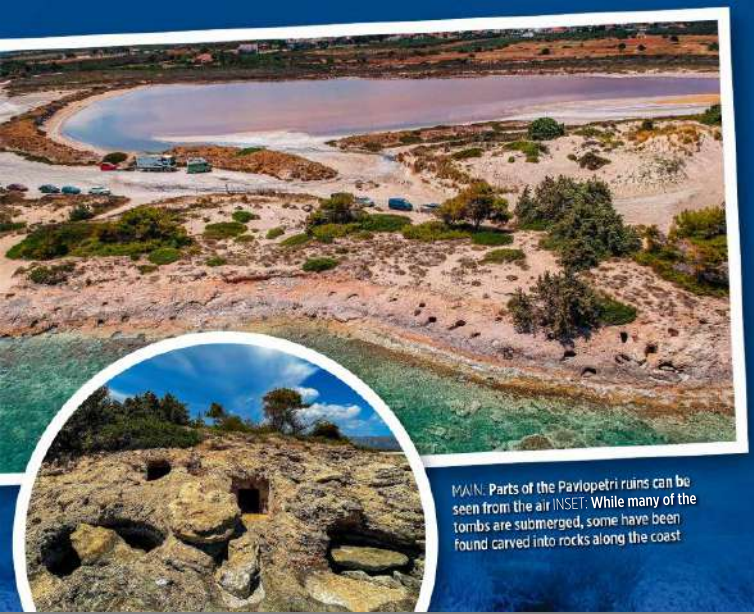
The city of Dwarka today, in northwestern India, is a site of pilgrimage for Hindus, being one of the Sapta Puri (seven sacred cities). A temple there is said to be the only surviving landmark of Krishna's capital city, known as Dvārakā. The ancient Sanskrit epic *Mahābhārata* described Dvārakā as a capital of the Anarta Kingdom, which was consumed by the sea. At its prime, the city is said to have had thousands of palaces made of precious stones, silver and gold. In the early 2000s, underwater remains were found in the Gulf of Khambhat, not far from the current city, suggesting that these legends may be partially based in fact. City walls have been discovered as well as buildings and stone anchors. Some of the examples of seals and pottery brought to the surface from Dvārakā date back as far as c3500 BC.

## SHI CHENG 9

China

In 1959, Qiandao Lake was formed to be a reservoir as part of a project for a hydroelectric station in eastern China. This process, however, meant that the 1,400-year-old imperial city of Shi Cheng had to be submerged. Today, the city lies around 100 feet below the lake's surface, and experienced divers who are permitted to explore the sunken site are greeted with almost pristine pagodas and temples as well as intricately carved lions, phoenixes and dragons. Thanks to the cold temperatures of the water, many of the city's ruins have been preserved.

Shi Cheng – meaning 'Lion City' in Mandarin, named after its proximity to Wu Shi Mountain (Five Lion Mountain) – boasts architecture from the Ming and Qing dynasties. The ruins were only rediscovered in 2001 when the Chinese government set up an expedition to locate the lost magnificent city under the surface of Qiandao Lake, which is also known as the Thousand Island Lake. It appears to be dotted with hundreds of tiny islands – actually the peaks of the mountains that had to be submerged along with the city for the hydroelectric station.



MAIN: Parts of the Pavlopetri ruins can be seen from the air INSET: While many of the tombs are submerged, some have been found carved into rocks along the coast

## PAVLOPETRI 10

Greece

Greece holds the record for being home to the oldest underwater city found to date – in the Mediterranean at least, if not the world. Lying just under the water off the coast of Laconia is the 5,000-year-old Pavlopetri, and unlike many other underwater finds this city is almost complete. Discovered in 1967 by marine archaeologist Nicholas Flemming, the sunken ruins were originally thought to date from the Mycenaean period in the 2nd millennium BC, but further finds suggest that the port was in use much earlier, being first inhabited around 2800 BC. There are at least 15 buildings, some of them with two storeys, and distinguishable road and water management networks. An earthquake has often been cited for the reason for Pavlopetri's flooding, but the ruins remained in almost pristine condition, offering up a treasure trove for underwater archaeologists. ⊙

**WORDS: EMMA SLATTERY WILLIAMS**

# WHAT IF... THE JACOBITES HAD SUCCEEDED?

**Jonny Wilkes** asks **Professor Daniel Szechi** about the possible chain of events had Bonnie Prince Charlie managed to seize the British throne – and how his victory could have reshaped the future of Europe

It took just six months in 1745 for Charles Edward Stuart to build a rising aimed at restoring his line to the British throne. Landing in Scotland with just a dozen men, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' assembled an army that seized the city of Edinburgh, crushed government forces in battle, and, with a force of around 5,000 men, marched into England as far as Derby. But then it all screeched to a halt. Despite convening a war council in early December to plan a further advance to London, his senior commanders forced a retreat. The last Jacobite rising was doomed.

"The decision to turn back was, in essence, a comeuppance because Charles had been brazenly lying for months that he had established a secret correspondence with English Jacobites and that they would rise up in great numbers if he led an army into England," says Daniel Szechi, a Jacobite historian and professor emeritus at the University of Manchester. "A great irony was that the English Jacobites had finally got their courage together and sent an emissary promising to rise."

If genuine – and not an empty gesture made once they knew Charles was turning back to Scotland anyway – then that could have opened up a road to potential victory: to London. Keeping the army led by George II's son, the Duke of Cumberland, to the southwest of him, Charles needed to persuade his lieutenants to push on and face the two armies he believed were directly in front of them. In fact, Szechi clarifies, there was only one – and that was "essentially Royal Guards plus a bunch of militia".

Still, to take and hold London required the assistance from France that had also been promised, which looked more substantial than English Jacobites' support. An invasion force was being thrown together and directed to Essex, so if Charles had seized a port first then they could have landed unhindered. Szechi says: "It seems highly unlikely that he could have taken London with 5,000 men, but backed up by national panic from a French landing and about 10,000 foreign troops... maybe."

## MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Yet capturing London would not have meant the immediate restoration of the Stuarts, but civil war. George II and loyal Hanoverians would have probably fallen back on another stronghold, perhaps a key port to take advantage of the Royal Navy and bring in troops fighting in Europe. With war raging across England, either side could have landed the decisive blow. It certainly would have been a gruelling task for Charles, even with French aid, to secure the throne and harder to make his early reign stable.

But what if there was an entirely different road Charles and his rising could have taken? "I adhere to another school, which is that he never should have gone into England at all," says Szechi. "Instead, Charles should have rallied the Scots on patriotic grounds, called a parliament, made commitments to the future of Scotland, and banked on as much help as the French could get to him." From that position of strength, the Jacobites could have held out until the British, who were struggling in the War of the Austrian Succession at the time, were forced to make peace.

Such a move could have avoided a protracted and bloody civil war, or at least changed what happened after the Jacobites turned back at Derby, when a furious Charles' refusal to cooperate led to a drift in strategy and defeat at the

## IN CONTEXT

The Jacobites had been fighting for the restoration of the Stuart dynasty since 1688, when James II of England and Ireland and VII of Scotland was deposed in the Glorious Revolution. Several conflicts and risings failed to return James II's son, James Francis Edward Stuart (the 'Old Pretender'), to the throne, meaning Charles Edward Stuart – the 'Young Pretender', better known as Bonnie Prince Charlie – was raised in exile in Rome. In 1745, he launched his own rising by sailing to Scotland.

Charles built an army from the clans, took Edinburgh and marched into England, making it as far as Derby, but promised support from English Jacobites and the French did not materialise and he was forced to return to Scotland. The decisive battle came at Culloden on 16 April 1746 and Charles' dwindling forces were routed by the army led by the Duke of Cumberland. Charles fled and the last hopes of Jacobitism were extinguished.

After fleeing the battlefield at Culloden, Charles spent five months in hiding and eventually escaped to France

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X1

LEFT: Charles Edward Stuart – commonly known as Bonnie Prince Charlie – had grown up in exile with his family in Rome

MAIN: The Jacobites were defeated at Culloden, near Inverness, in April 1746. The Duke of Cumberland's victory ensured that Hanoverian rule in Britain continued

battle of Culloden. "If they committed to Scotland from the outset, and just Scotland, there was a possibility that Charles could have emerged from any war as king of the Scots and with an armistice between him and the government of Britain," asserts Szechi.

That may not have been enough for Charles, who grew up indoctrinated with the belief that the British throne was his birthright robbed from his family. Civil war may have been a necessary price for him to be crowned Charles III. (His father, while still living, intended to abdicate.) Assuming that he did march into England and emerged victorious – and that's a big assumption – Charles' reign, according to Szechi, "would have made a very different British Isles."

Scotland could have become an autonomous, independent nation. If Charles acted in favour of the Scots who helped win him the throne and delivered on the political promises made by his father over the previous three decades, Scotland would have received a significant boost to its economy and built stronger foreign relationships due to privileged access to both the French and English empires. Ireland, too, might have achieved a higher degree of independence.

Perhaps the biggest change that can be guessed, with world-changing implications, is that Britain and France might have formed an alliance under Charles. This could have meant fewer wars throughout the 18th century, at least. "The French state wouldn't have been going so catastrophically bust by the 1780s and the monarchy possibly more popular," says Szechi. That leads to a staggering knock-on of 'what ifs': no French Revolution, no French assistance in the American War of Independence and no Napoleon, to name a few.

Another, formidable, prospect for the 18th century and beyond would have been a joint Anglo-French military venture. "France plus Britain – the French army plus the British navy – would have been dominant over all of Europe as far as the Russian frontier," says Szechi. "You can never rule out things going wrong, but it seems possible that the whole fate of Europe would have been changed."

## "CHARLES HAD GROWN UP INDOCTRINATED WITH THE BELIEF THAT THE BRITISH THRONE WAS HIS BIRTHRIGHT"

### DID YOU KNOW?

**SAVAGERY IN SCOTLAND**

Following the battle of Culloden, the Duke of Cumberland launched brutal punitive attacks in Scotland – earning him the nickname 'Butcher' – and laws were passed to dismantle the clan system and suppress Scottish culture, including a ban on tartan and kilts.

**LISTEN**

Mark Stephen visits the site of the battle of Culloden in a recent episode of *Scotland Outdoors*: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/p09dm2yq*

**NEXT MONTH**

**What if... the *White Ship* hadn't sunk in 1120?**

"The story pulls you in, and doesn't let go."

STEPHEN HARDING

*New York Times* bestselling author of *The Last Battle*

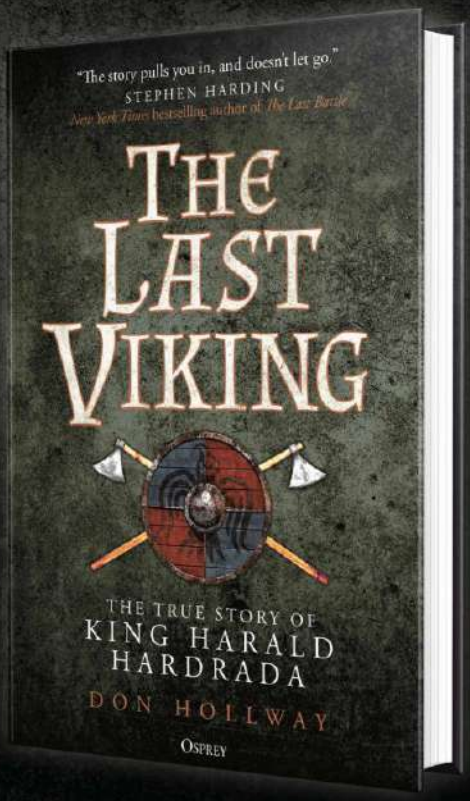
# THE LAST VIKING

## THE TRUE STORY OF KING HARALD HARDRADA

The king of the East
Has been drawn westward
Toward a glorious death.
That is my destiny.
There the ravens
Will pick their fill
From the sovereign's warriors.
I'll be there to feed them.

*KING HARALD'S SAGA*

Combining Norse sagas, Byzantine accounts, Anglo-Saxon chronicles, and King Harald's own verse and prose into a single, compelling story, Don Hollway brings the true tale of this Viking hero to life.

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**8,000**

The number of terracotta warriors, as well as around 670 horses and more than 100 chariots, discovered to date in China's Shaanxi province.

THE WAR OF DRUGS
MAIN: British ships open fire on an enemy fleet near Canton (now Guangzhou) in 1841

INSET: Chinese officials arrest the crew of the *Arrow* – a British cargo ship – in 1856. The incident triggered the Second Opium War

# Why did Britain and China go to war over opium?

**SHORT ANSWER** The British were addicted to tea, so started an illegal trade to get the Chinese addicted to drugs

**LONG ANSWER** Such was the British love of Chinese goods – like porcelain, silk and, of course, tea – that some of their merchants got into drug trafficking to buy them, and that led to two wars in the 19th century. The problem was that the Chinese wanted to be paid in silver, but the British didn't want to exhaust their reserves. Instead, they started exporting opium grown in India into China and sold it, illegally, for heaps of silver, with which they could buy what they wanted.

When China attempted to crack down on the opium business as millions of people had become hooked on the drug, the British sought help from their government in 1839. They got it in the form of a naval fleet. The far-superior weaponry meant that, by 1842, China was forced to sue for peace with crushing terms, including large reparations, more ports opened and Britain taking ownership of Hong Kong.

This unhappy resolution spilled into a second conflict, or Opium War, in 1856, which escalated until a joint British and French force stormed Beijing. The result: the opium trade was legalised and China faced a 'century of humiliation' with unequal treaties with European powers.

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1

MEN AT WORK
Australia's independence was marked with a formal inauguration ceremony in Sydney

**113**

The age of Yisrael Kristal when he celebrated his bar mitzvah in 2016. The Holocaust survivor had been unable to have his coming-of-age ceremony aged 13 in 1916, during World War I.

# When did Australia gain independence?

**SHORT ANSWER** By the end, the process of Australia becoming a sovereign nation took around a century

**LONG ANSWER** On 1 January 1901, the six self-governing colonies of Australia united to form a federation, the Commonwealth of Australia, marking a landmark moment in the fight for independence from British rule. It had been a long time coming, and was not the end either.

The idea of a federal system took root in the late 19th century. While supporters rallied in groups and arranged the National Australasian Convention in 1891, which drew up a draft constitution, it took several more organisations, conventions and referenda before the British approved it at the turn of the century. After 1901, Australia remained a dominion of the empire anyway. It was not until 1986 that the Australia Act was passed and the move to sovereign statehood was completed.

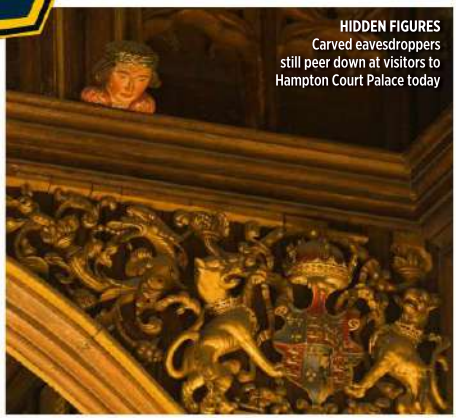
However, Queen Elizabeth II still remained head of state, something that causes contention and debate to this day as Australians differ in opinion over whether or not to become a republic.

# Why do we say 'eavesdrop'?

**SHORT ANSWER** Here's a clue: rain drops from the eaves of a house

**LONG ANSWER** No need to eavesdrop on the answer, we're going to tell you. The original eavesdrop referred to the land around a house where rainwater fell from the eaves. It goes back to the ninth century and had significant legal ramifications as a house couldn't be built if the eavesdrop would be in a neighbour's property. By the 17th century, the word had evolved to mean a person standing in that patch of land around a house and secretly listening to what happened inside.

Part of the facelift of the Great Hall at Hampton Court Palace under Henry VIII were carved, painted faces peering down from the ceiling beams, there to be gentle reminders not to gossip or scheme as there were ears everywhere. They were called eavesdroppers.



HIDDEN FIGURES
Carved eavesdroppers still peer down at visitors to Hampton Court Palace today

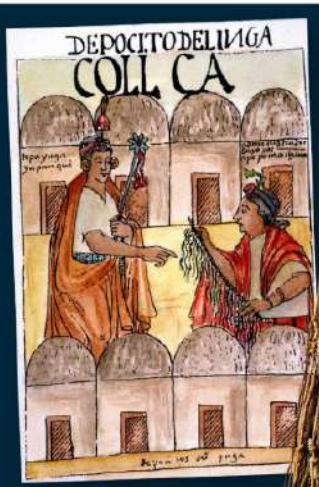
# How did quipus work?

**SHORT ANSWER** Strings that conveyed highly complex information – as long as the reader didn't get themselves tied up in knots

**LONG ANSWER** Derived from the Quechua word for 'knot', *quipus* were used as a means of accounting, communication and record keeping by the Inca and other Andean civilisations over the last 5,000 years. Hanging off a main cord would be hundreds of strings, with perhaps more strings hanging off these, each with an intricate set of knots that represented numbers or words. The style and colour of the knot, plus its position on the string, determined the meaning.

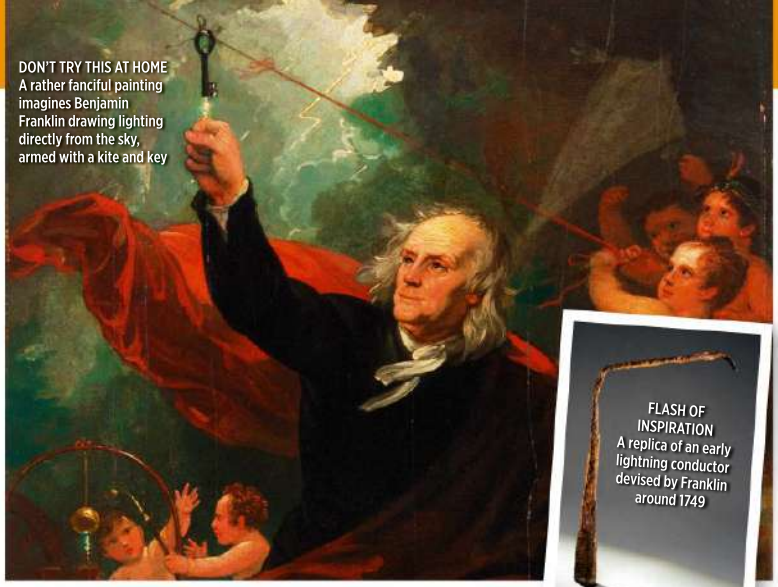
Clearly, this different kind of string theory required expert skill performed by the *quipucamayoc*. Hundreds of *quipus* have been discovered at Inca sites, but this is only a small fraction of the total number that were made, as *quipus* were used at every level of bureaucracy; some governments even adopted the devices to record census information and tax payments.

Interestingly, *quipus* could also be used to recount poems and stories – not bad for a civilisation without a system of writing.




STRING DRIVEN THING
*Quipus* were used by Incan accountants – as shown in the 16th-century image above

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3, HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES X1



DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME
A rather fanciful painting imagines Benjamin Franklin drawing lighting directly from the sky, armed with a kite and key

FLASH OF INSPIRATION
A replica of an early lightning conductor devised by Franklin around 1749

# What was Benjamin Franklin's kite experiment?

**SHORT ANSWER** Wait for a storm, fly a kite covered in metal, and hope that something shocking happens

**LONG ANSWER** Benjamin Franklin looked up at the skies over Philadelphia on a June afternoon in 1752 as a storm approached and thought to himself: perfect kite-flying weather. The revered polymath and soon-to-be Founding Father of the United States had devised an experiment to demonstrate the electrical nature of lightning, which amounted to flying a silk kite with a wire on top and a house key tied to it with hemp string in the hope of conducting electricity.

This didn't mean Franklin actually had to be struck by lightning (he would have likely died) – instead, the kite picked up the charge in the atmosphere. When he and his son William noticed the loose threads of the string standing upright, Franklin collected the "electric fire" in a Leyden jar, a special container able to store a charge.

By no means had Franklin discovered electricity – scientists were playing around with that for a long while – and he wasn't even the first to carry out the kite experiment. French physicist Thomas-Francois Dalibard, using Franklin's earlier notes, had a successful outing in May. But Franklin's experiment created real buzz around the study of electricity and led to his invention of the lightning rod.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**LEGEND'S LEG END**
Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, the Mexican general and statesman, held a funeral for his leg, which had to be amputated after a battle with the French. He had it paraded through Mexico City and entombed in a crystal case.

**FLY ME TO THE MOON**
The 17th-century English minister and educator Charles Morton wrote a treatise stating that swallows migrated every year to the Moon, flying at an average speed of 125 miles per hour for two months.

**FIRE SALE**
The richest man in ancient Rome, Marcus Licinius Crassus, formed his own fire brigade, which would only put out a house fire if the owner sold the property to him at a fraction of the price. If they refused, the fire brigade would watch it burn.

**DESTROYER DESTROYED**
After sustaining severe damage by a German torpedo in 1942, the British destroyer HMS *Porcupine* was cut into two halves and made into accommodation hulks. They were given the nicknames HMS *Pork* and HMS *Pine*.

# What was the reaction to the Eiffel Tower?

**SHORT ANSWER** Its critics would hate the fact it has become a global icon

**LONG ANSWER** Engineer Gustave Eiffel beat competition from over 100 submissions to design a centrepiece for the 1889 Exposition Universelle, a world's fair in Paris marking the centenary of the French Revolution. Not everyone was thrilled with the design, though. A group of artists and intellectuals, the Committee of the Three Hundred, put their names to an open letter decrying it as a "gigantic black factory chimney", and author Guy de Maupassant would later eat in the tower's restaurant every day, claiming it was the only place where he would not be forced to look at it.

Despite the negative feedback, it soon became clear that the majority of people loved France's new landmark, as it attracted 1,953,122 visitors during the Exposition.

TOWERING AMBITION
An 1887 magazine cover mocks Eiffel for comparing his creation to Egypt's pyramids

# Which capital cities are named after US presidents?

**SHORT ANSWER** Everyone should get Washington DC, but there's one more

**LONG ANSWER** The easy one is Washington DC. The US city was founded with the Residence Act of 1790, not long after George Washington was elected, which approved the creation of a capital and seat of government on the Potomac River.

Now for the less-obvious one. Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, got its name from fifth US president James Monroe, who was an ardent supporter for a colony of former enslaved people to be established in Africa. The idea was fulfilled in 1822, while Monroe was in office.

SECRET WEAPON
A new variant of the Junkers Ju 88 bomber was at the centre of a battle fought firmly on the ground

# When was the final ground engagement in Britain?

**SHORT ANSWER** The Battle of Britain in World War II was fought in the skies... mostly

**LONG ANSWER** Culloden in 1746 – the Jacobites' all-or-nothing bid to restore the Stuarts – is remembered as the last pitched battle on British soil (*see page 70*). The final ground engagement against a foreign force, however, came nearly 200 years later during World War II.

The battle of Graveney Marsh took place on the night of 27 September 1940 after a German Junkers Ju 88 bomber crash-landed in Kent. A new model, it had entered service just weeks earlier so the crew were under orders not to let it fall into enemy hands intact. They were interrupted preparing to blow up the plane by members of the London Irish Rifles, billeted in a nearby pub. The battle was brief and resulted in no fatalities before the Germans surrendered and were then taken to the Sportsman Inn for a pint. For saving the plane by removing an explosive device, Captain John Cantopher was awarded the George Cross.

**198**

The number of pseudonyms used by English writer and *Robinson Crusoe* author Daniel Defoe, including Jack Indifferent, Anthony Antiplot, Count Kidney Face and Hubble Bubble.

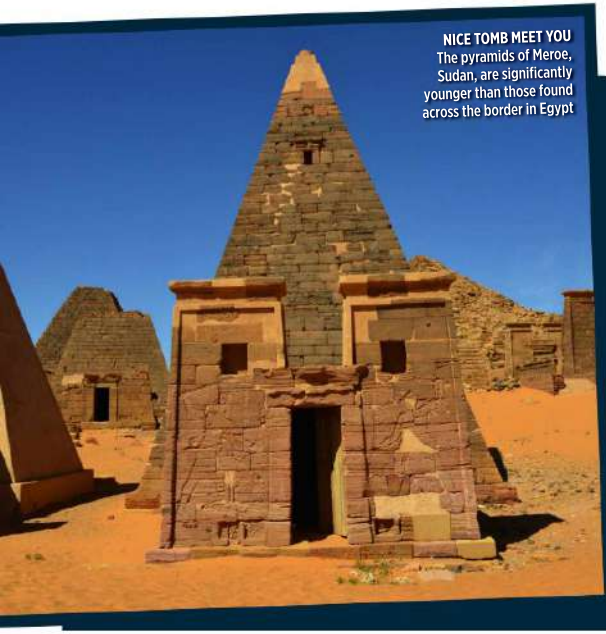
# How did Vikings care for their hair?

**SHORT ANSWER** Rather than the dirty, matted warriors of their reputation, they always kept a comb handy

**LONG ANSWER** Sure, Viking warriors wouldn't have worried about getting blood and gore in their hair during battle. The rest of the time, though, it seems that they were the height of hygiene and style. Viking sites have yielded countless tools and implements to suggest that a lot of time was given to appearance, such as tweezers, nail cleaners, toothpicks, razors, ear spoons (to remove wax), and countless combs made from bone or reindeer antler. The ornate decorations carved on these finds show that these were items of importance to the Vikings.

Hairstyles varied between classes and professions, but shoulder-length hair and beards were all the rage for the raging Vikings. They would also keep up the blonde look by bleaching their hair with soap containing lye. One eye-catching cut was to have the hair short at the back and a long fringe at the front, dubbed the reverse mullet.

SHARP STYLE
A Viking comb held at the Royal Ontario Museum in Canada



NICE TOMB MEET YOU
The pyramids of Meroe, Sudan, are significantly younger than those found across the border in Egypt

# What came first: Egypt's or Sudan's pyramids?

**SHORT ANSWER** Sudan has the quantity; Egypt got to the point earlier

**LONG ANSWER** Egypt gets all the glory and headlines when it comes to pyramids, despite the fact that neighbouring Sudan has at least twice as many. There are more than 200 at the ancient ruins of Meroe alone. The so-called Nubian pyramids look a little different – carved from granite and sandstone they have a smaller base and steeper incline – and are much younger.

Actually, the oldest in Sudan, erected around 700 BC, came half a millennium later than the youngest in Egypt. That didn't stop the Sudanese Minister of Information claiming in 2017 that his nation's pyramids were 2,000 years older than Egypt's, without much proof to back it up.

They were built by the rulers of the ancient Kushite kingdom in Nubia, who ruled Egypt during the 25th Dynasty (the eighth and seventh century BC) and borrowed elements of the culture, such as the extravagant tombs for their deific dead.

BRITISH ICONS
Lord Nelson (*inset*) perished on board *Victory* at the battle of Trafalgar, having been wounded by a French marksman

# How long was HMS Victory in service?

**SHORT ANSWER** The commission for Nelson's great flagship is 243 years and counting

**LONG ANSWER** HMS *Victory* was over 40 years old by the time the battle of Trafalgar was fought in 1805. Construction had begun at Chatham Dockyard in 1759 during the Seven Years' War and launched on 7 May 1765. With 104 guns over three decks, a length of 57 metres and an 800-plus-strong crew, *Victory* was ready for action… but the war was over.

It wouldn't be until 1778 that the ship was commissioned, sailing out of Chatham to be used as a flagship for the Channel and Mediterranean fleets during the American and French Revolutionary Wars and the fight against Napoleon (*see page 56*).

A number of admirals took command from Ushant to Gibraltar to Cape St Vincent, before *Victory* was placed in the capable hands (well, hand) of Horatio Nelson in the early 19th century.

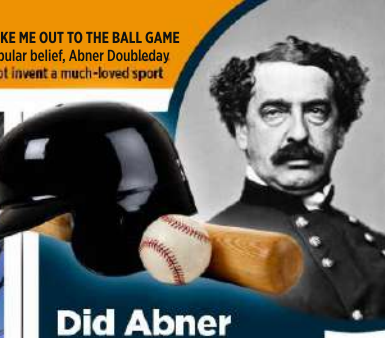
Badly damaged at Trafalgar – although not as badly as Nelson – *Victory* went through a major refit and continued service as a troopship, floating depot and prison ship, until being permanently harboured at Portsmouth from 1823. That was not the end of its service, though. In fact, there has been no end. *Victory* is still in active service as the flagship of the First Sea Lord, making it the oldest commissioned warship in the world.

# What is a Macedonian *phalanx* formation?

**SHORT ANSWER** Hundreds of six-metre pikes pointing right at you? You wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole…

**LONG ANSWER** The *phalanx* helped make the Macedonian infantry an unstoppable force on the battleground. The formation, developed after Philip II came to the throne in 359 BC and used to 'great' effect by his son Alexander, consisted of a densely packed square of 256 soldiers, formed of 16x16 lines, each thrusting a pike forward to form an impenetrable forest of spear tips. Despite being slow to manoeuvre and unprotected at its flanks, the *phalanx* was the most advanced formation in ancient warfare and held sway over the Hellenistic world for centuries, until the arrival of the Romans and their legions.

STICKING IT TO THEM
A modern illustration depicts the Macedonian army in a *phalanx* formation during the battle of the Carts, 335 BC



# Did Abner Doubleday invent baseball?

**SHORT ANSWER** That legend was told, and too readily believed, over half a century later

**LONG ANSWER** A cadet at the US Military Academy, and future Civil War hero, Abner Doubleday wrote the rules for baseball while training in Cooperstown, New York, in 1839. That was the story accepted by a commission in the early 1900s to discover the origin of the sport, keen to prove it was born and bred in the United States. Their evidence? A letter by Colorado mining engineer Abner Graves, which had not been checked for credibility. It had none. Still, the story was a home run – so much so that the baseball Hall of Fame now stands in Cooperstown.

In reality, there was no single creator or moment of inspiration as baseball evolved from other bat-and-ball games, which have existed since antiquity. It really took shape in 1800s New York, not thanks to Doubleday but teams like the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club, who played what is regarded as the first official game, losing 23 to 1 to the New York Nine.

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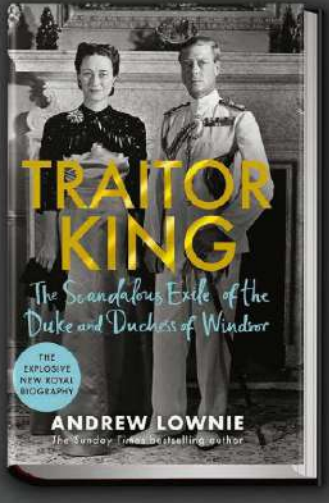
GETTY IMAGES X7, ALAMY X1

Beginning his astonishing biography at the moment most turn away, bestselling historian Andrew Lownie reveals the dramatic lives of the Windsors post-abdication. This is a story of a Royal shut out by his family and forced into exile, of the Nazi attempts to recruit the Duke to their cause, and of why the Duke, as Governor of the Bahamas, tried to shut down an investigation into the murder of a close friend. It is a story of a couple obsessed with their status, financially exploiting their position and manipulating the media to portray themselves as victims.

Drawing upon hitherto unexplored archives, Lownie shows how their glittering, brittle world was riddled with treachery and betrayal, and why the Royal family never forgave the Duke for choosing love over duty.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The Sunday Times bestselling author

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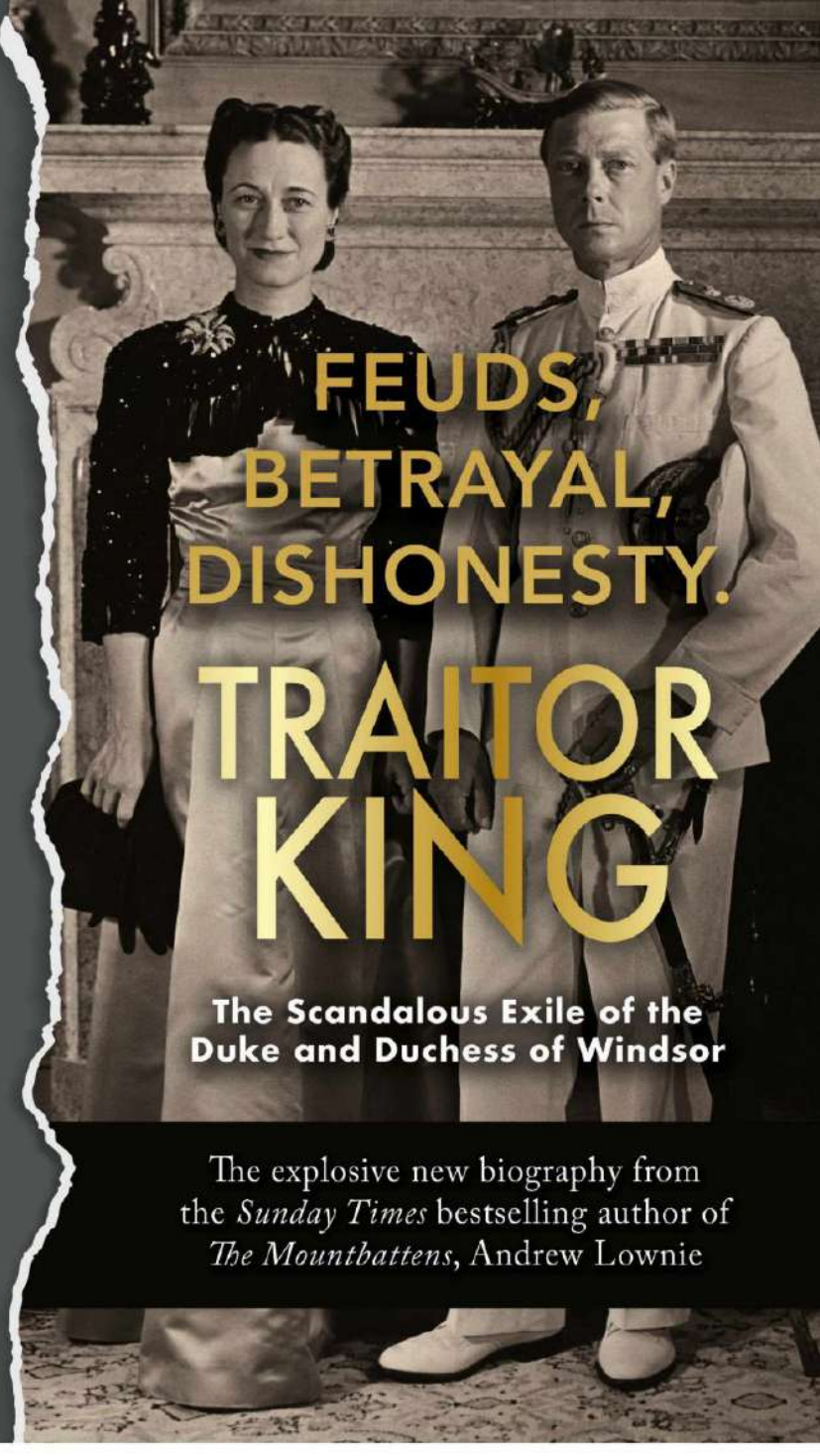
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ONE TO WATCH

ABOVE: **The Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp was set up in September 1981 following a government decision to store nuclear weapons at a Berkshire RAF base**

RIGHT: **Women who joined the camp were subject to beatings and arrests**

# Radical spirit

**Archive on 4: The Greenham Effect** / BBC Radio 4, Saturday 4 September

On 27 August 1981, a group of around 40 women set off on a march from Cardiff to RAF Greenham Common, located near Newbury in Berkshire. Their protest was sparked by the British government's decision to allow cruise missiles to be stored at the airbase. They set up what came to be known as the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, which would only be disbanded 19 years later, in 2000.

The Greenham protests have become synonymous with the last nervy years of the Cold War and also with opposition to Margaret Thatcher's brand of Conservatism. And yet there are other stories here too, less redolent of the 1980s: most notably the way the Greenham protesters redrew the rules of campaigning and non-violent direct action, and how they sparked new thinking about the role of women in society.

These are narratives Rebecca Mordan is well placed to explore. As a child, she lived at Greenham. In the present day, she is one of the co-founders of Greenham Women Everywhere, an oral history of the peace camp and the activism it fostered, and artistic director of the Scary Little Girls feminist theatre company.

Her latter role is probably not unrelated to her formative experiences because there was a playful and creative element to the Greenham protests, such as when, in December 1982, 30,000 women joined hands around the base in an event dubbed Embrace the Base. Yet life at Greenham could be dangerous, involving beatings and arrests.

Those who feature as Mordan looks back include folk singer Peggy Seeger, whose songs include 'Carry Greenham Home', and filmmaker Beeban Kidron, director of a documentary of the same name and who would go on to direct *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*. Plus, some of those inside the wire and Conservative minister Michael Heseltine also offer their perspectives.

GETTY IMAGES X2

A new fly-on-the-wall series follows life at one of the world's most famous museums

## Exhibiting stress

**Inside America's Treasure House: The Met / BBC Four, scheduled for September**

At the beginning of 2020, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was getting set to celebrate its 150th anniversary. Then the global pandemic hit and, rather than hosting gala drinks parties, the New York gallery was forced to close its doors indefinitely.

What happened next is inevitably one of the main subjects in this fly-on-the-wall series, which follows life at the Met. As with so many other institutions, Covid-19 had a dire effect on the Met's finances as it lost income from ticket sales, cafes and souvenir shops.

The year would bring further complications. In May, George Floyd was murdered and the Black Lives Matter movement gathered pace. The Met holds items from many different cultures, and here was a moment in time where those running the museum found themselves needing to consider issues around institutional racism.

Historian and broadcaster David Olusoga heads to West Yorkshire for the fourth outing of *A House Through TIme*

# Bricks and mortar genealogy

**A House Through Time** / BBC Two, scheduled for September

At the beginning of the 19th century, Headingley was just a village, but change was on the way. As the Industrial Revolution gathered pace, nearby Leeds was becoming both prosperous and polluted. Headingley, located just two miles northwest of the city, was about to become a leafy suburb, a place of spacious houses from which to commute to work.

One such house features in the fourth series of *A House Through Time*, once again presented by David Olusoga. As with the previous series, which explored the histories of Newcastle, Liverpool and Bristol, the new shows look for the stories of those who called the house home down the years, looking for the traces they left in sources such as the census, news reports and trade directories.

In the case of the Headingley house, the textiles industry features prominently in the lives of many of its inhabitants, testament to the importance of the sector in the growth of Leeds. However, there are also tales of a building firm based in the city and associated with Victorian grandeur, and of the *Leeds Mercury* newspaper.

*A House Through Time* has been a huge hit for the BBC and it's easy to see why. There's something fascinating about the idea of learning who lived in our homes before we did – especially at a time when so many of us have spent a great deal of time in these spaces because of lockdowns. Don't we all want to find, as the press notes here have it, tales of "love triangles, larceny, childhood abandonment and reversals of fortune"?

The series also charts Headingley's transformation from a small village to a thriving Leeds suburb

A scene from *Respect* shows Aretha Franklin recording her hit 1967 single of the same name

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# A mournful anniversary

**Surviving 9/11** / BBC Two & iPlayer, scheduled for late August/early September

It's 20 years since Al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners and attacked New York and Washington. Horrific images of two of the planes flying into the Twin Towers were beamed around the world. Here was terrorism as a kind of gruesome theatre writ large, a day where anyone old enough to remember what happened can remember where they were and what they doing.

But what if you were caught up in events that, at the time, were almost impossible to process? How do you get on with the rest of your life if you were a first responder or the relative of someone who died – or even a fighter pilot steeling yourself for the possibility you will have to ram the tail of one of the hijacked passenger planes?

It's these kinds of stories, garnered from the testimony of 13 ordinary people, that lie at the centre of *Surviving 9/11*. Directed by Arthur Cary, the documentary intertwines two narratives: the two-hour period of the attacks and the way they have affected the lives of the interviewees in the two decades since.

On BBC One, *9/11: Inside the President's War Room* offers a very different perspective. Here is the story of the attacks and their immediate aftermath as seen from the heart of the US government. The feature-length documentary features new and exclusive interviews with, among others, former US president, George W Bush; his vice-president, Dick Cheney; secretary of state, General Colin Powell; and Condoleezza Rice, national security advisor.

MAIN: A new documentary looks at how survivors' lives have continued to be affected by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001

INSET: British survivor Vanessa Lawrence – who had been working as an artist-in-residence inside the North Tower – is one of 13 people to share their stories

# Soul survivor

**Respect** / In cinemas from Friday 10 September

In 1966, Aretha Franklin signed for Atlantic Records. Having earlier struggled to find commercial success, the Queen of Soul was about to enjoy the most successful years of her career, enjoying a string of hits with classics such as 'Chain of Fools', 'Think' and the song that gives this new biopic its pointed title, 'Respect'.

The film stars Jennifer Hudson, who won an Academy Award for her turn alongside Beyoncé in the musical *Dreamgirls* (2006). It follows a musical life that began with Aretha singing in church, and which shows the struggles she endured before – and after – finding stardom.

The personal and political, notably Aretha's involvement in the struggle for civil rights, both feature.

To judge by the trailers, which show Hudson belting out some of Aretha's best-loved songs, the actor is more than capable of doing the story justice. The strong supporting cast includes Forest Whitaker as CL Franklin, Aretha's charismatic pastor father; Marlon Wayans as Ted White, her manager and first husband; and Mary J Blige as Dinah Washington.

Jennifer Hudson, who won an Oscar for the 2006 film *Dreamgirls*, portrays Franklin at the height of her fame

## Transparently fascinating

**The Hidden History of the Window** / BBC Radio 4, Tuesday 28 September

It's an architectural feature that says much more than you might expect, in particular about class and status – and also how society has evolved. All good reasons for Dr Rachel Hurdley to throw open the history of windows.

Along the way, Hurdley investigates what changing window designs signify, and discovers the role of department stores, with their window displays, in giving women new freedoms. She also considers a key question posed by the window: are we inside looking out or outside looking in?

Suspended between the galleries is a V-1 flying bomb – a visual reminder of the interconnection of the Holocaust and World War II

GALLERIES

# New Second World War and Holocaust galleries

**FREE ENTRY** IWM London, opens 20 October, *iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-london*

Two permanent new galleries dedicated to the history of World War II and the Holocaust are set to open at IWM London following a £30.7 million refurbishment project.

Featuring stories from more than 80 countries, the World War II gallery will shed light on the global conflict that defined the 20th century. Among the items on display will be a deconstructed 1940s house, bringing the impact of the Blitz to life, while a piece of wreckage from the USS *Arizona* will serve as a harrowing reminder of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Poignant objects will also be found in the Holocaust gallery, too, including a section of concentration camp barrack from Velten – a sub-camp of Ravensbrück and Sachsenhausen concentration camps, which housed Jewish, Roma and Sinti women, as well as political prisoners. This will be shown alongside photographs, books, artworks and letters telling the stories of some of the six million Jewish people murdered in the Holocaust.

With the opening of these displays, IWM London will become the first museum in the world to feature dedicated galleries to both World War II and the Holocaust under one roof. Although entry will be free, pre-booking a timed slot via the website above is advised.

ABOVE: **More than 2,000 objects will be on show in the new Holocaust gallery**
TOP: **A conservator carries out work on a piece of material from the barracks of a concentration camp; it is thought to have formed part of a house after the war**

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM X3, DOUGLAS ATFIELD X2, THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM, GETTY, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Frances Griffiths surrounded by drawings of fairies attached with hat pins, 1917. The images caused a sensation in *The Strand* in 1920 (*inset*)

EXHIBITION

## The Cottingley Fairies: A Study in Deception

FREE ENTRY Treasures of the Brotherton Gallery, University of Leeds, until November 2022, *library.leeds.ac.uk*

In 1920, the world was fascinated and fooled by an article in *The Strand*, which featured intriguing photos taken by Elsie Wright and Frances Griffiths, young cousins from the West Yorkshire village of Cottingley, that appeared to confirm the existence of fairies. For decades, the authenticity of the photographs was hotly debated, but it was only in 1983 – more than 60 years later – that the pair finally confessed to the hoax. The fairies pictured were actually drawings, carefully cut out and attached to their surroundings with hat pins.

This free exhibition, on show at the University of Leeds, contains some of the images that captured the public's imagination for so long. If you can't make it in person, a version of the display can also be viewed online at *bit.ly/FairiesExhibition*

EXHIBITION

## Decoding the Roman Dead

PAID ENTRY Colchester Castle, until 6 January 2022, *colchester.cimuseums.org.uk*

A new exhibition shedding light on the lives – and deaths – of Colchester's ancient Roman inhabitants is now open to visitors. Centred around 15 sets of human remains, the display examines the variety of scientific techniques used by experts to determine how people died, what illnesses they had, and where they originally came from.

More than 200 objects will be on display, including remains from cremation burials and burial goods such as coins, jewellery and oil lamps. A unique statue of the Roman god Mercury (*pictured right*), who led souls to the underworld, will also be on show.

A statue of Mercury (*above*) will be shown alongside Roman-era grave goods (*left*)

EXHIBITION

## Hokusai: The Great Picture Book of Everything

PAID ENTRY The British Museum, 30 September 2021 – 30 January 2022, *britishmuseum.org*

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) remains one of Japan's most celebrated artists, best known for his iconic print *Under the Wave off Kanagawa*. This month, 103 recently acquired brush drawings by Hokusai, intended for an illustrated encyclopaedia known as *The Great Picture Book of Everything*, will go on show at the British Museum, depicting scenes from Buddhist India, the natural world, ancient China and more. The encyclopaedia was never published, meaning that Hokusai's drawings – which would have otherwise been destroyed as part of the woodblock printing process – can still be enjoyed. As well as demonstrating his skill as an artist, the works also reveal a version of 19th-century Japan that was much more intrigued by the wider world than previously thought.

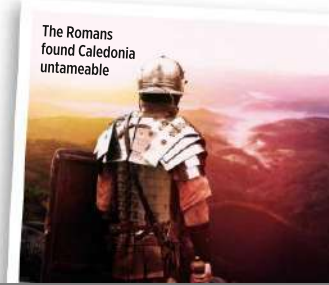
*Under the Wave off Kanagawa*, also know as *The Great Wave*, is perhaps the most iconic work created by Hokusai

EXHIBITION

## Romans: Edge of Empire

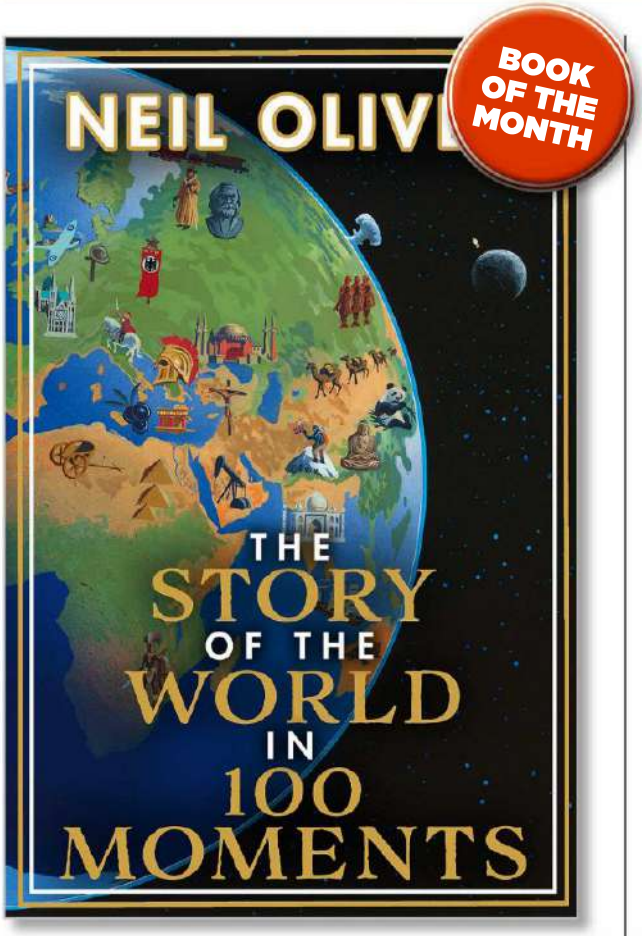
FREE ENTRY Perth Museum and Art Gallery, 9 October 2021 – 6 February 2022, *culturepk.org.uk*

Although the Romans conquered much of Britain, they never fully took over Scotland – though this wasn't for want of trying. In a bid to prevent invasions from the north, the Romans built two walls – Hadrian's Wall, which today runs through northern England, and the Antonine Wall, which spans Scotland between the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Clyde. But what was life like for the Celtic-speaking tribes living beyond these walls, on the edge of a global empire? This free exhibition examines the interactions between the two peoples, featuring an array of illuminating artefacts and exhibits.



# BOOKS & PODCASTS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS




## The Story of the World in 100 Moments

**By Neil Oliver**
**Bantam Press, £25, hardback, 432 pages**

Pleasingly leaning into the idiosyncrasies of the format from its first page – how can we do justice to history's rich pageant in merely 100 moments? – this is a very personal take on the global past from author, historian and presenter Neil Oliver. Key themes soon emerge: a refreshing focus on the importance of events outside the west, and the idea of history as a story, passed down from generation to generation. From the Fall of Babylon to the rise of the Information Age, this is entertaining, illuminating stuff.

## The Searchers: The Quest for the Lost of the First World War

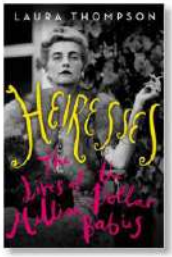
**By Robert Sackville-West**
**Bloomsbury, £25, hardback, 368 pages**

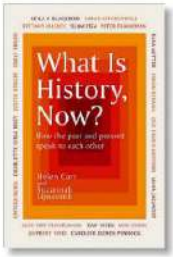
More than a century on, we're now familiar with the enormous human toll of World War I, the vast cemeteries of northern France, and the thousands of soldiers left uncommemorated on the battlefield. But, perhaps, less is known about the efforts to trace and identify some of these unknown victims after the conflict ended – an omission put right by this evocative account. It's a story that stretches right to the present day, too, thanks to the clues offered by scientific and technological breakthroughs.

## Heiresses: The Lives of the Million Dollar Babies

**By Laura Thompson**
**Apollo, £25, hardback, 384 pages**

Richly chronicling the experiences and exploits of 'women of independent means', this vibrant social history tells the stories of heiresses between the 17th and 21st centuries. Some crossed the Atlantic in search of new experiences and new horizons; others used their wealth to forge new possibilities in the realms of marriage, culture and polite society. Of course, tales of financial fortune are often stalked by those of personal misfortune, and there is sadness here, too – but a rich seam of empathy runs throughout.






## What is History, Now?

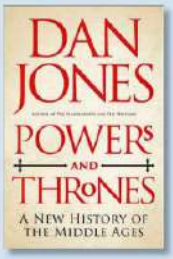
**Edited by Suzannah Lipscomb and Helen Carr**
**W&N, £20, hardback, 352 pages**

In 1961, the historian EH Carr wrote *What is History?*, exploring how we study the past. Fifty years on, his granddaughter, Helen Carr, has teamed up with historian Suzannah Lipscomb for this follow-up, exploring what history means to us today, in 2021. It's a star-studded affair – Alex von Tunzelmann on historical films, Gus Casely-Hayford on museums, Jaipreet Virdi on the stories of people with disabilities – that places the subject right at the very heart of a host of crucial 21st-century debates.

## Powers and Thrones: A New History of the Middle Ages

**By Dan Jones**
**Apollo, £25, hardback, 720 pages**

You know exactly where you are with Dan Jones: even at the outset of what could otherwise be a daunting, 700-page trek through the Middle Ages, his firm grasp of the narrative and lively style leaves you in no doubt that you're in good hands. And so it proves in this centuries-spanning, continent-hopping journey, which opens with the collapse of the Roman empire and powers through to the seismic shifts wrought by Renaissance and Reformation. A great primer to a crucial era of world history.



## The Radical Potter: Josiah Wedgwood and the Transformation of Britain

**By Tristram Hunt**
**Allen Lane, £25, hardback, 352 pages**

Eighteenth-century entrepreneur Josiah Wedgwood was an accomplished potter, whose pioneering creations – including his instantly recognisable, coloured jasperware – were matched by his innovations in industrial techniques. Yet, as historian and V&A director Tristram Hunt explores, Wedgwood was also politically radical, as interested in the rights of workers as he was the emancipation of enslaved people and possibilities of free global trade.

# PODCAST WHAT TO LISTEN TO...

**Each month we bring you three of our favourite podcasts from the BBC and HistoryExtra**

## You're Dead to Me

**bit.ly/JennerPod99**

Greg Jenner's lively BBC Sounds series returns for a new run, once again bringing leading experts together with comedians to mine a diverse array of subjects for historical and comedic gold. Guests this time round include Peter Frankopan, who explores the life and legacy of Russian tsar Ivan the Terrible, and Sally Phillips, who delves into the magical – and often macabre – world of fairy tales.

## Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York, on historical fiction

**bit.ly/FergusonPod99**

It's always fascinating to hear how authors combine fact with fantasy to conjure up historical fiction. Here the Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson, discusses the writing of her new novel, *Her Heart for a Compass*, with co-author Marguerite Kaye in an episode that first aired in August.

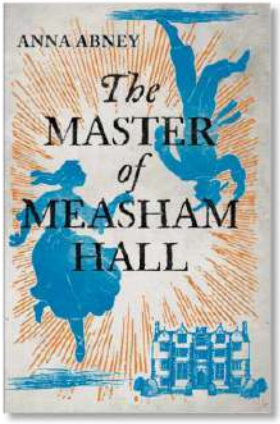
## Witness History: The Building of the Berlin Wall

**bit.ly/BerlinWallPod99**

Sixty years ago, in August 1961, troops and workers from communist East Germany began building an edifice that was to divide streets, lives and ideologies for decades: the Berlin Wall. This episode from the BBC World Service series *Witness History* charts the causes and consequences of the boundary.

GETTY IMAGES X2

# HISTORICAL FICTION...




## The Master of Measham Hall

By Anna Abney
Duckworth, £14.99

London in 1665: the Civil Wars still cast a long shadow over the country, even though Charles II has been restored to the throne. Alethea Hawthorne is hoping to return one day to her family's ancestral home, Measham Hall in Derbyshire, but she needs to wait for her brother to receive a pardon for killing a man in a duel. Before that happens, she finds herself alone on the streets of London as the Great Plague is raging, and must befriend an unlikely travelling companion if she is to make her journey home, through a land filled with pestilence and religious dissension.

## Excerpt

*London is in a state of decline during the plague of 1665*

A pink dawn stretched itself over the pestilential city like a silk cloth thrown over a rotting carcass. It was early, but that did not account for the lack of smoke. Since the taverns had been shut the brewers had closed. The lime burners, the butchers, the soap boilers and the chandlers, there was not a business left unaffected by the contagion. Even from her cosseted position in the Calverton household Alethea had heard people complain about the dearness of fuel. This quiet, clear sky signalled the absence of human activity. London was a city left to the dead and the dying.

She stood and shook out her cramped limbs. She had waited long enough. If she could not find a coach, she would walk home to Derbyshire. She reckoned she could do it in five days, a week at the most. Measham Hall was where William was most likely to be. He would never expect her to linger in a place like Deptford and if he did not find her in London he would know she had gone home.

## Q&A
### Anna Abney

Anna Abney is the pen name for Open University academic in English and Creative Writing, Dr Madeline Dewhurst. *The Master of Measham Hall* is her second novel; *Charity*, which explores Britain's colonial past in Kenya, was longlisted for the Bath Novel Award in 2020.

**Why did you choose to set your novel shortly after the restoration of the monarchy?**
The 17th century has been somewhat neglected in fiction, but I find it a fascinating period in British history, with civil wars, radical ideas and new ways of perceiving the social order. I think Britain is probably the only country to restore its monarchy after getting rid of it. My PhD was on Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle (1623–73), and although the focus was on the period just before the Restoration, I was intrigued by the way the Civil Wars left an enduring legacy. But, it was Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* that lit the spark for this novel.

**Have you seen any parallels between the current Covid-19 pandemic and the plagues of the 1660s?**
Social distancing was practised during the 1665 plague. The Lord Mayor of London, Sir John Lawrence – one of the few wealthy men to remain in the city – even had a glass box made for himself so that he could receive visitors. The plague had a huge impact on people's livelihoods with many artisans and labourers becoming destitute, and people would break 17th-century lockdown to beg on the streets. Death rates were much higher among the poor who lived in crowded accommodation and couldn't afford to escape the infection, while the rich were able to escape to country residences.

**Your ancestors lived at Measham Hall. How did it feel bringing them to life?**
That's been great fun. They were a lively lot who have moved in and out of historical moments since the Norman Conquest. I've taken a lot of artistic licence, but I feel I can as they're my forebears, which I wouldn't do with any other historical figures.

**Is there a historical period or figure you'd like to write about next?**
I'm moving towards the 18th century in the sequel to *The Master of Measham Hall*, which covers the 'Horrid Popish Plot' of 1678, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the following Williamite Wars in Ireland. Although he was welcomed by many, William of Orange had come to England with an army of more than 21,000 men and a spectacular invasion fleet. The battle of the Boyne in 1690 is still celebrated by some communities in Northern Ireland, but these important political events aren't really taught in English schools.

IX TWILMOT

# CROSSWORD

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## CROSSWORD No. 99

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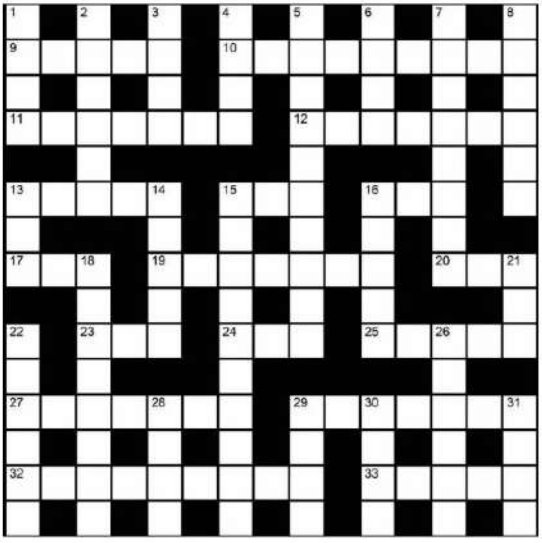

Set by Richard Smyth

### ACROSS

**9** Jesse ___ (1913–80), US athlete (5)
**10** ___ of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (1744–1818), Queen of Hanover and consort of George III (9)
**11** King of the Phrygians, known for his legendary knot (7)
**12** City of Uttar Pradesh, besieged during the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (7)
**13** Biblical prophet, swallowed by a whale (5)
**15** Nickname of the Argentine revolutionary Ernesto Guevara (1928–67) (3)
**16** 2001 boxing biopic by Michael Mann (3)
**17** Cathedral city in Cambridgeshire (3)
**19** Elizabeth ___ (1810–65), English novelist and biographer (7)
**20** Paul Newman western of 1963 (3)
**23** 1927 satirical novel by Upton Sinclair (3)
**24** Byname of the Welsh Labour MP Aneurin Bevan (1897–1960) (3)
**25** George ___ (b1930), investor known as 'The Man Who Broke the Bank of England' (5)
**27** Aristotle ___ (1906–75), Greek shipping magnate (7)
**29** "___ is a country of young men" – RW Emerson, 1870 (7)
**32** Prime minister of Great Britain from 1770 to 1782 (4,5)
**33** Judge ___, comic-book character created in 1977 (5)

### DOWN

**1** Phileas ___, Jules Verne hero (4)
**2** City on the West Bank (6)
**3** Historic town of northern Italy, formerly a free commune (4)
**4** Phil ___ (1940–76), US protest singer (4)
**5** Boston silversmith and hero of the US Revolutionary War (1735–1818) (4,6)
**6** Guinness, Douglas-Home or Bedser, perhaps (4)
**7** Miles ___ (d1656), militia commander for the Plymouth Colony (8)
**8** Ai ___ (b1957), Chinese artist and activist (6)
**13** Uncle ___, nickname in the west for Josef Stalin (3)
**14** Georg Wilhelm Friedrich ___ (1770–1831), German philosopher (5)
**15** The Sicilian Mafia (4,6)
**16** Ancient city in the south of France (5)
**18** ___ Cavalry, former volunteer force in the British Army (8)
**21** The Underworld, in ancient Egyptian legend (3)
**22** NASA human spaceflight programme, 1961–72 (6)
**26** Medieval raider along the England-Scotland border (6)
**28** George ___, pen-name of the author Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin (1804–76) (4)
**29** Arthur ___ (1943–93), US tennis player (4)
**30** Work of Icelandic legend (4)
**31** 1871 opera by Giuseppe Verdi (4)

## CHANCE TO WIN

BOOK WORTH £25 FOR THREE WINNERS

**River Kings**
by Cat Jarman

### HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **BBC History Revealed, October 2021 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA** or email them to **october2021@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **1 November 2021**.

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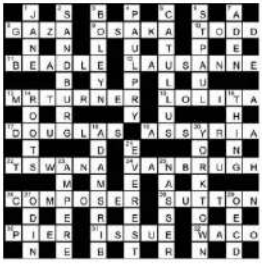
## SOLUTION Nº 97



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# LETTERS

Our recent article on the burning of Washington DC in 1814 prompted Douglas Abramson to share a story about the city's origins

A member of Andrew Woodcock's family perished during Sir John Franklin's failed expedition to find a Northwest Passage

ALAMY X2

## BIRTH OF A CITY

In the first paragraph of your recent article on the Burning of Washington (August 2021), Emma Slattery Williams states that the evening of 24 August 1814, when British troops set the government buildings ablaze in Washington, was the first time since the War of Independence that a foreign power had captured the city.

Any military occupations of that area before 1814 wouldn't have been noteworthy and they wouldn't have been of Washington. Before the building contractors descended on the area with their teams of enslaved people to build Washington, it was a pestilence-ridden lowland swamp next to the Potomac River. It wouldn't surprise me if there had been a small village or two that were literally ploughed under during the city's building, but certainly nothing of strategic importance before the backroom deal between Jefferson and Hamilton agreed to place the capital permanently on the north shore of the Potomac to stroke southern egos – especially the Virginians'.

**Douglas Abramson,**
by email

## FAMILY CONNECTION

Your piece on the history of the Northwest Passage (Q&A, September 2021) was of great personal interest to me. In a way, Sir John Franklin's heroic failure to open a Northwest Passage around the north coast of Canada more than 170 years ago is out of human memory and could be considered more akin to Sir Francis Drake and Ferdinand Magellan's voyages. But if you have a family connection, as I do, it is different.

In 1837, my 3x great uncle, 3rd Lieutenant John Irving RN, and his younger brother, David Williamson Irving (my great-great grandfather), went out to Australia to take up farming. Soon after arriving in Australia, John Irving RN discovered that Sir John Franklin – who, at the time, was colonial governor of Van Diemen's Land – was mounting an expedition to find a Northwest Passage. John Irving rejoined the Royal Navy, sailed back to England and then headed up to Scotland; in 1847, he boarded HMS *Terror* for Canada.

In 1879, John Irving's buried frozen body was discovered by American Navy Lieutenant Schwatka; his body was transported to Edinburgh where it was given a civic funeral attended by the Lord Provost and other dignitaries.

**Andrew Woodcock,**
Wiltshire

# NEXT ISSUE

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## CROSSWORD WINNERS

The three lucky winners of the crossword from issue 96 are:

**CJ Deacy, Greater Manchester**
**B Fellows, West Midlands**
**B Hare, Wiltshire**

Congratulations! You've each won a copy of *Murder: The Biography*

Please note, due to Covid-19, we will be unable to post your prize until we are working in the office once more. Please bear with us!

## CONTACT US

facebook.com/HistoryExtra twitter.com/HistoryExtra @HistoryExtra

**EMAIL US:** haveyoursay@historyrevealed.com
**OR POST:** Have Your Say, BBC History Revealed, Immediate Media, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4ST

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**PHONE:** Toll-free 888-941-5623
**EMAIL VIA:** immediatemedia@buysubscriptions.com


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**EDITORIAL**
**Editor** Charlotte Hodgman
charlotte.hodgman@immediate.co.uk
**Deputy Editor/Digital Section Editor** Kev Lochun
**Production Editor** Jon Bauckham
**Staff Writer** Emma Slattery Williams
**Digital Editor** Emma Mason
**Acting Digital Editor** Elinor Evans
elinor.evans@immediate.co.uk
**Digital Section Editor** Rachel Dinning

**ART**
**Art Editor** Sheu-Kuei Ho
**Picture Editor** Rosie McPherson

**CONTRIBUTORS & EXPERTS**
Will Bashor, Rob Blackmore, Madeline Dewhurst, Matt Elton, Elinor Evans, Margalit Fox, Carolyn Harris, Marisa Linton, Spencer Mizen, Lisa Moses, Gordon O'Sullivan, Richard Quincey, Danny Robins, Richard Smyth, Daniel Szechi, Nige Tassell, Jonny Wilkes, Jonathan Wright

**PRESS & PR**
**Communications Manager**
Emma Cooney 0117 300 8507
emma.cooney@immediate.co.uk

**CIRCULATION**
**Circulation Manager** John Lawton

**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**
**Advertisement Manager**
Sam Jones 0117 314 8847
sam.jones@immediate.co.uk
**Subscriptions Director**
Jacky Perales-Morris
**Subscriptions Marketing Manager**
Natalie Lawrence/Kevin Slaughter

**PRODUCTION**
**Production Director** Sarah Powell
**Production Co-ordinator**
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GETTY

## VICTORIAN MUGSHOTS c1890

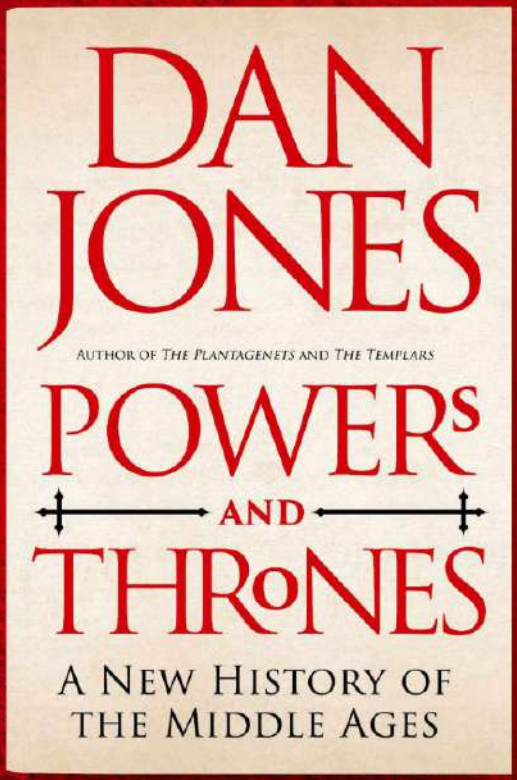
Inmates at HMP Wormwood Scrubs in London have their photograph – or mugshot – taken for the prison register. They are holding up their hands to show distinguishing features, such as missing fingers or tattoos, and a mirror is held to the side to show their profile.

Capturing images of prisoners as a form of identification goes back to the earliest days of photography, while keeping a register and picture of those arrested has been a legal requirement in the UK since the Prevention of Crimes Act of 1871. However, it is French police officer Alphonse Bertillon (1853–1914) who is credited as the father of the traditional mugshot. Using anthropometry – the study of the measurements of the human body – he developed a system to aid police in identifying individuals and standardising images so that they showed both the face and profile of the subject.

GETTY IMAGES

FROM THE BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF

# THE TEMPLARS

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